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**Seven sages of
Rome**

The history ...Rome

London

1684

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Control Number: BBX-2489 OCLC Number : 05787306

Call Number : W 382.8225 W89

Main Entry : Seven sages of Rome.

Title : The history of the seven wise masters of Rome / now newly corrected, better explained in many places, and enlarged with many pretty pictures, lively expressing the full history.

Imprint : London : Printed for J. Wright, 1684.

Format : [176] p. : ill. (woodcuts) ; 16 cm. (8vo)

Note : Running title: The seven wise masters.

Note : The text is almost identical with that printed by Wynkyn de Worde, with the spelling modernized.

Note : The last leaf of both editions contains a list of books to be had of their respective publishers.

Note : Signatures: A 4 B-L 8 M 4 [\$4 signed (-A1, A3, A4, L4, M3, M4; C2 signed 'B2')].

Subject : Chapbooks, English. Added Entry : Worde, Wynkyn de, d. 1534?

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Film Size: 35mm microfilm

Image Placement: IIB

Reduction Ratio: 8:1

Date filming began: 6/28/98

Camera Operator: CL

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3828225
W60

W 38 R. 8225-W89

6118



THE
HISTORY
OF THE
Seven Wise Masters
OF
ROME.

Now newly Corrected, bet-
ter Explained in many places,
and Enlarged with many pretty
Pictures, lively expressing the full

HISTORY.
Seven Sages.



London, Printed for J. Wright, at the
Crown on Ludgate-Hill, 1684.

1901-1916

To the Reader.

618W



Or thy better delight, and more plainly to set forth the History to thy view, I have to my great cost added many Pictures, lively expressing the most material points of mine. If I may receive thy thanks, I think it a sufficient Reward. The History of it self is both Ancient and Moral, and containeth in it much Learning.

When Ignorance having a thick and dull ear, blinded most People, Men are compelled to draw the rude multitude to Attention of good Instruction by such pleasing allurements of Tales and Fables, as in this Book is set down; that as the mind is fed and delighted with the sweetnes of Fabulous Stories, the Soul it self at the end (by often tasting the same Nourishment) grows quicker sighted; to behold the hidden and Mystical Wisdom contained under such close Riddles. For in few words to give you the meaning of this Moral, it is thus: The Emperor may signifie the World, who ha-

To the Reader.

Bring but one only Son, (who is Man) him to bring up well is all his care. But man losing his own Mother, (who is Reason or Divine Grace) falling into the hand of his Step-mother, (signifying Sin) who is an Empress of great bewitching, and one that commands the World. She works by all possible means the confusion of Man, and would prevail against his weakness, but that a Star from Heaven (by which is meant Goodness from above) instructs Man how to avoid the Allurements of Sin, by not opening his mouth to bid her welcome. And the better to prevent her mischief. He hath *Seven Wise Masters*, which are the Seven Liberal Sciences, to give him wholesome instructions, and by those helps save him from mortal danger. So that being thus armed, Man liveth to batter down Sin, (figured in the death of the Empress and her Minion) and in the end to gain a Rich Crown of glory and happiness, set ready for all those that in this Life labour to attain to Heaven by doing well.

This is the Explanation of the Morral; of which if thou make right use, it will be a rich Banquet to thy Soul. Farewel.

Here

Here Begynneth the

HIStory OF THE SevenWise Masters of Rome.

Containing many Pleasant and Witty
Narrations, very delightful to the Reader.

The Entrance into the Mortal, (which according to things of Commick Pleasure) properly begins with a Funeral.

Sometime in the City of Rome there was a Famous Emperoz, named Pontianus, a man of great wisdom, he took to his wife a Kings Daughter that was very fair and amiable, to all people gracious, and to her Husband right dear: she conceived by him, and was delivered of a Son named Dioclesian. The Child grew apace, and of all people was beloved: and when he was of the age of seven years, his Mother the Empress falling sick, and fearing her self that she might not live, sent after her Lord the Emperoz (being rode forth on Progress) a Messenger, that he should return without tarrying, if ever he wouls see her alive.

Ans



And when he was come, she said unto him, O my dear Lord, of this Sickness I may not escape, wherefore the natural and tender love and care that is to me, towards you and your Son makes a suit to you before my death. He replied, desire what you will, I shall not deny you anything. Then said she, after my death you will take another Wife, as is most convenient; wherefore I beseech you, that she over my Son have no power, but that he be nourished far from her, and trained up in learning. The Emperor answered, my most dear Wife, your Petition in all things shall be performed. Then turned the Empress, and gave up the Ghost. Many days after the Emperor bewailed her death, and long after shewed his heaviness, and would in no wise be joyful. How

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How the Emperor committed and delivered his Son to the Seven Wise Masters to be instructed in Learning.

Upon a time as the Emperor lay in his bed, he thought himself inwardly of his Son, saying in his heart, I have but one only Son, the which shall be my Heir: it is good while he is young, that he be set to learn Cunning and Wisdom, by which he may after my death govern and rule the Empire; intimating therewith that a worthy Prince taking upon him so great a weight and charge, as the Government of a Kingdom, ought first to learn to be his own Governour, and to master his own affections. So that when he was early risen up from his Bed, he caused to be called the Lords of his Council before him, and of them took advice what were best therein to be done. And they answered, Lord, in Rome are seven Wise Masters, who live in great fame for their excellencie in Arts, grave Counsel, and instructions; let them be sent for, and deliver them your Son to be fostered and instructed in Learning. The Emperor understanding that, sent his Letters made powerfull by his own Seal, to the Seven Wise Masters, that they should come to him without delay: they anon came before the Emperor, and he demanded of them, if they knew wherefore he had sent for them; they answered, The cause is as your will intendeth, we know not but

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But if it please you to shew us your mind, we be ready to fulfil it to the utmost of our Powers. To whom the Emperor said, I have but one Son, which I shall deliver to you to confirm in all good ways of Learning and vertue, so that by your doctrine and wisdom, he may more wisely govern the Empire after my decease.



The first Master named Pantillas, said, Lord deliver me your Son, and I shall teach him as much cunning within seven years, as I and all my fellows can.

Then spake the secend Master, named Lentulus, Sir, of long time I have served you, and hitherto have had no reward. I demand nothing of you, but that you deliver me your Son to govern, and I shall make him as cunning within six years as I and all my fellows.

The

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The childe spake named Craton, said: my Lord, many times I have been with you on the Sea, in peril of my life, and have had no manner of reward: if I might for my recompence obtain that you would vouchsafe to commit your Son under my Governance, I should inform him as much within five years, if his wit will hereto attain, as I and my fellows can.

Then stood up the fourth Master named Malquidrack, who was right lean of Body, and said By Lord, remember I and all my Predecessors have served Emperors, and received no reward; wherefore I ask no other thing but that you deliver me your Son to teach, and I shall make him take as much Scirnee and Wisedom within four years as I and all my fellows have earned in all our lives.

Then spake the fifth Master, that was named Josephus: Lord, I am old, and many times I am called to your Council, and you know that my counsel hath proficed you; and so likewise may it do hereafter: Yet I desire no more, but that you deliver me your Son, and I shall instruct him in as much Cuning and Scirnce, that he within threé years shall be prompt in Wit as much as I and all my fellows have.

Then came the sixth Master named Cleophes, who said like to the other, promising to inform the Childe in all their Cuning in two years.

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The seventh Master also desired the Child, and promised to learn him within one year, the Sciences and Wisdom of them all.

When all this was done, the Emperoz said, My trusty Friends, I am very much bound to thank you all, and every one of you, for that you have so earnestly desired to foster and instruct my Son: If I should now commit him to one and not to another, thereupon would ensue much dissension among you. Therefore to you all, and every of you, I commit my Son to be nourished and taught. The Masters hearing this, expressing both their greatness of joy, and forwardness in will to the Emperoz, all with one harmony of consent, received his Son: and led him towards the Court of Rome. Upon the way spake Craton to his fellows; if we this Child should teach within the City of Rome, there is so great resort and concourse of People, that it would hinder him in Learning; I know a fair place from Rome some two miles, right pleasant and delectable, there let us make a four square Chamber of Stone, and put him therein; and upon the Walls thereof, let us paint and write the seven Liberal Arts, so that the Child at all times may see and behold his Doctrine therein as well as in his Book. This advice pleased them all and was done accordingly in every point: the Masters diligently every day, during seven years taught and instructed the Child; and de-

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termined among themselves, and said, it is good that we examine our Disciple, to see at what perfection our pains hath arrived, and what strength and growth his vertue and knowledge is come to ; and they all wisely and religiously accorded to that counsel : then said Master Pantillas, how shall we prove him ; Craton said, let every one of us as he sleepeth, put under every corner of his Bed an Olive-leaf, and then we shall know if he perceived or felt any thing, or not : this done, he awaking greatly marvelled and lifted up his eyes towards the roof of the Chamber fervently. The Masters seeing that, said, wherefore lift you up your eyes so sharply : he answered, it is no marvel ; for in my sleep I saw the uppermost part of my Chamber inclined towards the earth, or else under me it was lifted up : the Masters hearing this, said among themselves, if this Child live he shall be a man of great cunning and fame.

How the Emperor by the Counsel of the great Princes and Lords of his Empire, wedded another Wife.

The Princes and great Lords of the Empire in the mean time came to the Emperor, and said : My Lord, ye have only one Son, it is possible he might die, therefore it were profitable that you would wed another Wife.

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that thereby your joys and hopes may be blest with far more certainty and assured happiness in your Race and Issue, to the intent that the Empire of Rome be not left without an Heir. Moreover you are so mighty, that if it should happen you to get many Children, you may promote and advance them all to great Dignities and Lordships. Whereupon answered the Emperoz: it is your counsel, that I shall take another Wife: then seek me one that is gracious, a pure Virgin, Fair and Gentle born, and then I shall follow your counsel and advice. They went and sought and searched out many Kingdoms and Countries; and at the last they found the Kings Daughter of Castile, that was right fair and beautiful, and her they gave the Emperoz to Wife; who behaved her self so well, that anon he was so greatly taken in her love, that he forgot all the sorrow of heart he had taken for the death of his first Wife. And when they had lived long together without any Children, and when the Empress saw that she might not conceive, when she heard the Emperoz had a Son with the Seven Wise Masters, to be fostered and taught, to the great good and profit of the Empire, she thought in her self and wished his death, and from that very hour imagined how she might conspire his destruction. It hap- pened on a Night as the Emperoz lay in his bed

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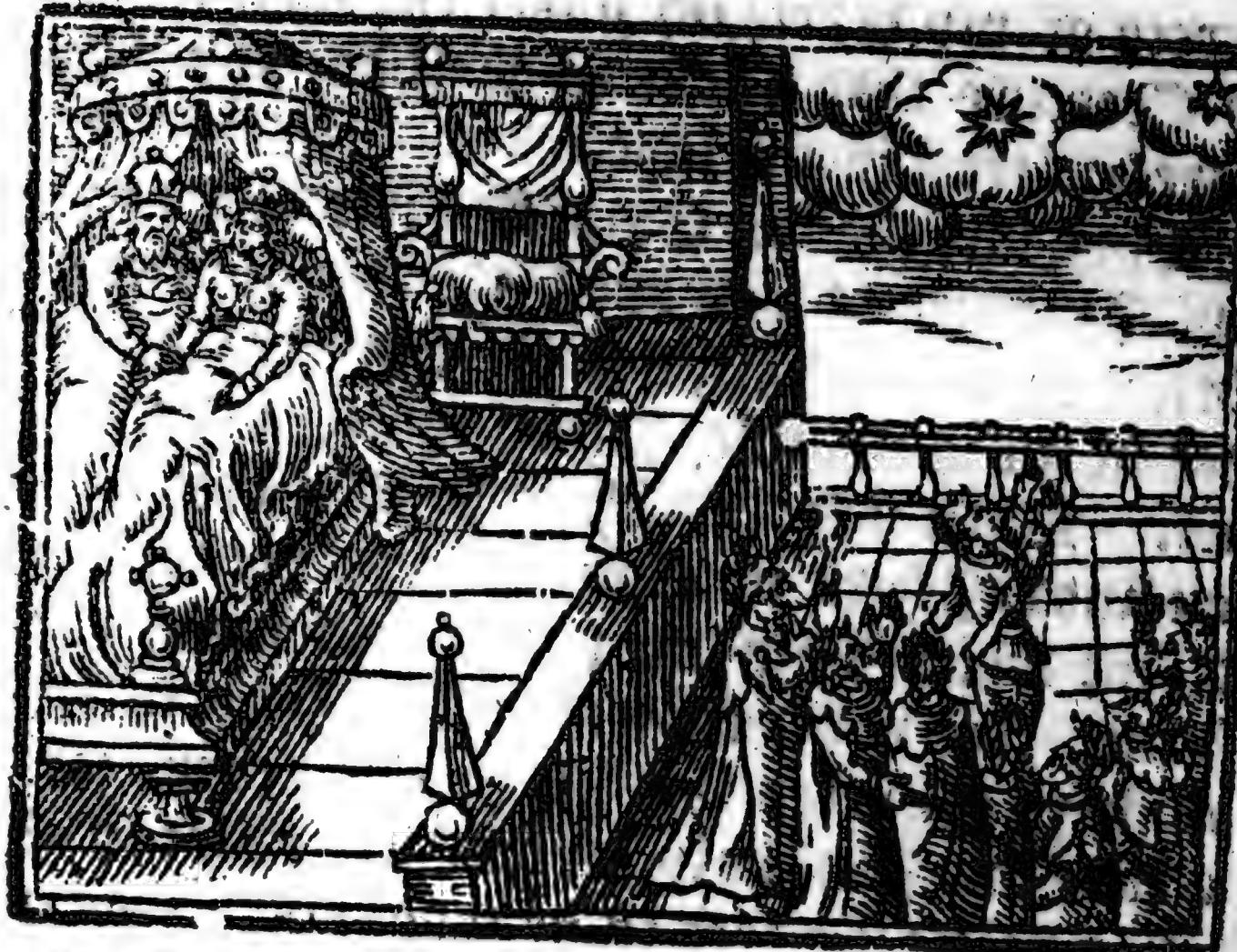
bed he said unto the Empress: my most dear and best beloved Wife, I shall now open to you the secrets of my heart, for under the Sun there is no Creature that I love so well as you, and therefore trust in my love.

Then said the fair Empress: if it be so as you say, I require of you one little boon or petition. Desire what you will, said the Emperoz, and all that in me is possible, I shall fulfil, and give it you. Then said the Empress, My dear Lord, you know I have no Child by you yet conceived, for which I am sore pensive and heavy; but Fame, that never conceals it self long to true joy, hath delivered this happy truth to me: that ye have one Son only, the which is set to the Seven Wise Masters to be taught and governed, and him I hold and require for my own Son: wherefore I beseech ye send for him, that I may see him, and have consolation of his presence, as though he were mine own. Whereupon answered the Emperoz, it is sixteen years past since I saw him, your will shall be fulfilled. Incontinent the Emperoz sent unto the Seven Wise Masters a Letter sealed with his secret Sign, that upon pain of death they should bring his Son in the Feast of Penticost following.

How the Seven Wise Masters after the sight of the Emperors Letter would first observe the course and divine fore-shewing of the Firma-

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ment, and Planets, whether it were good
obey his Commandinents or not.



And when the Masters by the Letter had
understood the Emperors will, in the night
they went and beheld the Stars in the firma-
ment, whether it should be expedient to bring the
Child to the Emperoz or not : and they saw
clearly in the Stars, that if they should lead the
Child in that time assigned, at the first word he
should speak he should die an evil death : where-
fore they were all very sorry : and as they beheld
another Star, they saw, that if they delivered not
the Child at the day aforesaid, they should lose
their heads. Then said one of them, of two evils
the least is to be chosen : it is better that all we
die, than that the Child should lose his life : there-

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to herefore that we may save the Childs life, let us go to the Emperoz. And as they were thus sorrowful, the Child came down from his Chamber, and seeing his Masters so heavy, he demanded the cause of their heaviness: whereunto they answered: Sir, we have received your Fathers Letters, that upon pain of death, now this high Feast of Penticost, we shall lead you to your Country, whereupon we have beholde the Firmament, wherein we clearly find, that if we (within the time persixed) present you to your Father, at the first word that ye shall pronounce out of your mouth, ye shall be to the most vilest death condemned. Then said the Child, I must also behold the Firmament with the Stars: and so he did; and found clearly in a little Star, that if he could abstain from speaking seven days he shuld preserve and save his life. And after he had seen this, called his Masters and shewed them the Star, and said: Behold my dear Masters, I see perfectly in the Star, that if I abstain my self seven days, I shall save my life. Ye are now seven Masters, the wisest of all the world, it is an easie thing for you, every of you for me one day to answer, and with your wise answer every of you his day, my life may save and keep; and in the eighth day I shall speak my self, and save my life, and all you from peril. As the Masters did behold that certain Star, they thought with themselves that

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the Child had said truth, saying, Almighty God
be thanked that the wisdom and cunning of our
Disciple exceedeth us all. Then said the first
Master Pantillas, Lord I shall speak for you the
first day, and save your life. And Lentullus the
second Master, said, I shall for you the second
day answer: and so consequently every of them
promised to answer for himself his day: and this
said, they cloathed the Child in Purple, leaped
on horseback with a fair Company, and hasted
with the Child to the Emperoz.

How the Emperor rode to meet his Son coming
from Study, with Joy, Solemnity and Triumph.



When the Emperoz perceived that his Son
was coming on the way, he rode with
great joy to meet him, and the Masters under-
standing

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standing the coming of the Emperor, said unto the Child, it is best that we depart, that in the mean while we may provide how we may save your life. The Child said, it pleaseth me well that you do so, but have mind of me in my necessity : so they took leave and departed toward the City, and the Child came after accompanied most honourably. And as he and his Father the Emperor met, for joy he took his Son about the neck and kissed him, and said : My dear Son, now is my joy compleat, beholding in thee the treasure of my life's comfort. How is it with you : it is long since that I saw you. He bowed down his head and answered nothing. The Father had great wonder why he spake not, and thought in himself, that his Masters had informed him so, that he riding should not speak. And when they were come into the Palace, and were descended from their Horses, the Father took the Son by the hand, and led him into the Hall, and set him next him, and beheld him, and said : Tell me now how it is with your Masters : How have they instructed you these many years since I saw you : But he bowed down his head again, and spake not. The Father said, Wherefore speak ye not to me. When the Empress heard that the Emperor's Son was come, she was right joyous, and said, I will go see him. So he apparelled her self with rich attire, and took with her two of her

Gen.

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Gentlewoman, and went, whereas the Emperoz
Was sitting with his Son; and set her down by
the Child: and she said to the Emperoz, is this
your Son that hath been nourished with the se-
ven Wise Masters; and he said, it is my Son,
but he speaketh not: she said, deliver to me
your Son, and if ever he speak, I shall make
him. Then said the Emperoz, rise and go with
her: The Son did reverence to his Father as
though he said, I am ready to accomplish your
will: and so he went with her.

How the Empress led Dioclesian the Emperors
Son with her into a Chamber, to make good
Cheer with him, the which he withstood.

The Empress led him with her into the
Chamber and commanded all others to a-
void and set him by her before her bed-side, and
said: O my best beloved Dioclesian, I have
heard much of your person and beauty; but now
I am glad that I may see that which my heart
coveteth and loveth: for I have caused your Fa-
ther to send for you, that I might have solace
and joy of your person, wherefore right heartily
I give you knowledge that I for your love unto
this day have kept my Virginity; speak to me
therefore, and let us go to bed together: But
he gave her no answer. She seeing that, said to
him, O good Dioclesian, which hath the half
of my Soul, why speak ye not to me of at least

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shew me some token of love: what shall I do? I speak to me, I am ready to perform your will: And when she had thus said, she embraced him, and would have kissed his mouth, but he turned his visage from her, and in no wise would consent: then she said again, O Son, wherefore do you thus with me? let us sleep together, & then shall ye perceive, that for your love I have kept my Virginity: but he turned his visage again from her; he seeing that of her, he was ashamed, shewing unto him her naked Body and Breasts, saying: Behold my Son, what Body I have, it is at your will, a servant to your pleasure: give me your consent, or it shall be hard for me to depart hence in my right mind. He shewed her no manner of love, but as much as he could withdraw himself from her. When she saw that, she said: O my best Son, if it please you not to consent unto me (yet speak) perhaps for some reasonable cause? Lo, here is Pen, Ink, and Paper, then write your will, whether I may at any time hereafter trust in your love or not. The Child wrote as followeth. O Lady, God forbid that I should defile my Fathers Orchard: For I wot not what Fruit I should have of it: I know well that I should sin greatly in the sight of God, and also run in the malediction of my Father; and therefore from henceforth I pray you provoke me no more thereto.

When she had seen and read the Writing,
She

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she tore it with her teeth : and rent her Clothes to her Pavet, and scratched her visage till it was all bloody, and cast from her all the ornaments of her head, and cryed out with a loud voice : Come hither my Lords and help me, lest this rude and evil body shame and ravish me.

How the Empress complained to the Emperour, of the shame done unto her by his Son.

The Emperoz being in the Hall and hearing the cry of the Empress, hastily run toward her Chamber with many of his Knights and Servants following him, to know the matter. Then began the Empress to cry and speak to the Emperoz in this wise : O my Lord, have pity on me : behold this young man is not your Son, but the foulest for Ribaldry and actious of Luxury, that ever sin and heat put strength into : For as you know, I led him into the Chamber, and would have exhortet and caused him to have spoken ; I have done as much therefore as I can or may ; and whilst I moved him to have spoken, he hath endeavoured himself with me to have sinned ; and because I would not consent but withstood as much as I might to slie the same, he hath made my Visage all bloody ; and torn my Vesture and Ornaments off my Head as you may see ; and if you had not soon come unto my calling, he had ended in me, his most foul

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foul and wicked appetite! When the Emperoz
saw and heard this (filled with great malice and
wrothnesse), he commands his serbants to lead
him to the Gallows and hang him. When the
Lords heard thereof they said to the Lord you have
but this Son only, it is not good that ye thus
slightly put him to death. The Law is ordaine
ed for Transgrefors: and if he must dye, let
him by the Law die, let it be said that the
Emperoz in his wrath, (without Law or In
nise) had put his only Son to death. As the
Emperoz heard this, commanded him to be
put in Prison till judgment was given against
him. When the Empress understood that the
Child was not put to death, she wepe bitterly,
and woulde take no rest: when night came, the
Emperoz entered into his Chamber to go to bed,
and found his wife sorrowing: To whom he
said: O my dear Lady, for what cause are ye
sorrowful? She answered, know ye not that
your accursed Son hath done me so much shame
and dishonoured you, that you commanded him
to be hanged, and yet he liveth, and your wroth
is not performed, nor my shame revenged; to
morrow (said the Emperoz) he shall die by the
Law: then said she, shall he so long live? Then
might it happen to you as it did to a Burgess
of Rome, of whom an example is mentioned:
the Emperoz said, I pray you shew me this ex
ample: that shall I do gladly says the Empress.

The

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The first Example of the Empress.

In the City of Rome was a Burgess, which had a fair Garden, wherein he had a right Tree, the which every year brought forth fruit of good vertue, so whosoever eat thereof that were sick of any manner of sickness, or leprosie, he should soon be whole, and receive his sight.



It happened on a day as the Burgess went into the Garden to visit the Tree, he espied under the Tree a fair young Imp, and called to him the Gardiner, and said: my friend of this young Imp I give thee charge, for I trust of that to plant a better Tree than this is. The Gardiner said: I shall it gladly do. Another time the Burgess came again into his Garden to visit the young Plant, and it appeared unto him

him that it grew not so much as it should do ; and he said to the Gardiner : how may this be ? and he said, it is no wonder, for this great Tree hath so great arms and branches, that the air may not come to the root of the young Tree ; then said the Burgess, cut and hew off the Arms and the boughs, that the air may come thereto. The Gardiner did as he commanded. The Burgess came again another time to see the young Plant, and thought that it grew never the better, and said to the Gardiner : what is it that letteth this Plant not to grow now ? and he said, I suppose the height of the old Tree letteth the Sun, that the Rain may come not thereto, and therefore it cannot grow. Then said the Master unto him, hew down that Tree to the ground, for I hope of this Plant to have a better than ever that was. The Gardiner hearing his Master, hewed down the Tree, and as soon as this was done, the young Plant perished, and came to nought : wherefore there came great harm ; for when the poor sick people perceived that the Tree was destroyed (they cursed all them that were Counsellors and helpers thereto) by the which they oftentimes were healed and cured of their infirmities : then said the Empress to her Lord, understand ye what I have said : he answered yea right well : Then said she, I will declare the meaning of that I have said.

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The Declaration of the Example.

THIS Tree, my Lord, betokeneth your most noble Person, how that with your counsel and help, many poor and sick folks are greatly comforted: and the young Imp which is grown under the great Tree, is your accursed Son, that now by cunning beginneth to grow, and shall dieth first, how he might cut off the Arms and Boughs of your might, and how to win him the Land, and favour of the people, yea and moze unnaturally, imagineth to destroy your person, that he may himself reign; but what shall then ensue thereof? All poor and feeble people shall curse them who might have destroyed your Son, and have not yet done it: Therefore I counsel you, whilst you are in power, that you destroy him, lest the curse of the people fall upon you. Then said the Emperoz, ye have given me good counsel, to morrow I shall condemn him to the vilest death that can be thought upon. When the day was, the Emperoz went and sat in Iugment, and commanded his Servants to lead his Son to be hanged with Trumpets sounding in token of death. As the Emperoz's Son was led through the City, the common people began to weep and cry, Alas the only Son of the Emperoz is led towards his death: And therewithal came Pantillas the first Master riding upon a Horse. When the Child

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aw him, he bowed his head, as though he said, mind me, when you come before my Father, see how I am led towards the Gallows. Then the Master said to the Servants: Make no haste, for I hope, by the Grace of God, this day to deliver him from death. Then said all the people: O good Master haste you to the Palace, and save your Disciple; he smote his Horse with his spurs till he came to the Palace, and kneeled to the Emperour and did him reverence. To whom the Emperour said: it shall never be to thee good; who answered, I have deserved a better reward. The Emperour said, thou lyest; for I delivered my Son to thee well mannered, and now he is brought home dumb, and hath sought to work his will, to the shame of my vertuous Empress, and the dishonour of his Fathers Bed for ever; therefore this day shall he die; and ye shall die a shameful death. Then said the Master, Lord forasmuch as your Son speaketh not, the cause whereof God knoweth, and without cause it is not, as you shall understand: and whereas you say, that he would have committed the sin of inforcement on your Empress, I shall say to you of a truth: He hath been in our Company to the space of sixteen years, and we never could perceive such an abuse by him: Therefore my dear Lord, I shall shew you one thing, that if you put your Son to death for the words of your wife, it shall happen to you

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worse than to a Knight that killed his best Greyhound (through the words of his Wife which saved his Son from death. Then said the Emperour to the Master : tell me that Example. The Master said, Lord, that shall I not do soz before I shall end, your Son might be dead and then without hope shall I rehearse it : but if it please you this noble Example to hear, call again your Son till to morrow ; and as you think by reason, then do with him your pleasure. As the Emperour heard that, anon he willed the Child to be called again : and in the mean time he set him in prison, while the Master finished his Tale ; and then began in this maner following :

The first Example of the first Master.

There was a valiant Knight had one only Son, as you have, which he loved so much that he ordained for his Keepers three Nourishers ; the first should give him suck, and feed him ; the second wash him, and keep him clean : And the third should bring him to his sleep and rest. The Knight had also a Greyhound and a Falcon, which he also loved right well. The Greyhound was so good that he never ran at any Game, but he took it, and held it till his Master came. And if his Master dispassed him to go to any Wattel, if he should not sped therein, anon as he should mount upon his

Hoole,

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Horse, the Grey-hound would take his Horse's tail in his mouth, and draw backward, and cry and howle marbelously loud. By these signs and the observations thereof, the Knight did always understand, that his journey should have very ill success. The Falcon was so gentle, and hardy, that he was never cast off to his prey, but he took it.

The same Knight had great pleasure in Justing and Turney, so that upon a time, under his Castle he proclaimed a Turnament, to the which came many great Lords and Knights. The Knight entred into the Turney, and his Lady went with her Maidens to see it, and as they went out, after went the Scourishers, and left the Child lying in the Cradle in the Hall, where the Grey-hound lay near the Wall, and the Hawk or Falcon standing upon a Peatch. In this Hall there was a Serpent lurking, to all them of the Castle unknown, which when he perceived they were all absent, he put his head out of his hole, and when he saw none but the Child in the Cradle, he went out of his hole, towards the Cradle, to have slain the Child.

The Noble Falcon perceiving that, and beholding the Grey-hound that was sleeping, made such rustling with her wings, that the Grey-hound awaked and rose up; and when he saw the Serpent near the Child, anon against him he leaped, and they both fought so long, that the

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Serpent had grievously wounded the Grey-hound, that he bled so sore, that the earth about the Cradle was bloody. The Grey-hound when he felt himself grievously wounded, starts fiercely upon the Serpent, and fought so sore, and eagerly, that betwixt them the Cradle was overcast with the Child, the bottom upward; and



the Cradle having four pummels, which it fell upon, they saved the Child from having any hurt: what can be more express to make geed the wonder in this preservation of this Child: with great pain the Grey-hound slew the Serpent, laid him down again in his place, and licked his wounde. And ouster as the Jests and Tourney was done, the Scourisers came first into the Castle, and saw the Cradle turned the upside down

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down upon the earth, compassed round about with blood, and the Grey-hound also bloody, and said among themselves, that the Grey-hound had slain the Child; and were not so wise as to turn up the Cradle again with the Child, to see what was befallen: and said, Let us run away, lest that our Master shoulb lay the blame upon us, and slay us. Running away they met the Knights wife, and she said unto them, Wherefore make ye this sorrow, and whither will you run? Then they said, O Lady, wo be to us, and to you! Why said she, what is happened? shew me: the Grey-hound, they said, that our Lord and Master loved so well, hath devoured and slain your Son, and lieth by the Wall full of blood. As the Lady heard this, she presently fell to the earth, and began to weep pitifully, and said: Alas! O my dear Son, are ye thus slain? What shall I now do, that I have mine only Son thus lost? Herewithal came in the Knight from the Tourney, beholding his Lady crying, he demanded wherefore she made so great lamentation? She answered: O my Lord, the Greyhound you loved so much hath slain your onely Son, and lieth by the Wall satiated with the blood of the Child. The Knight exceeding angry went into the Hall; the Grey-hound arose to meet him, and did fawn upon him as he was wont: But the Knight drew out his Sworþ, and with one stroak smote off the

The Seven Wise

Grey-hounds head ; then he went to the Cradle where the Child lay, and found his Son whole, and by the Child, the Serpent lay slain ; and by divers signs, perceived the Grey-hound had killed the Serpent for the defence of my Child, Then with great sorrow he tore his hair, and said : Who is me, that for the words of my wife I have slain my best Grey-hound, which hath saved my Child's life, and slain the Serpent, therefore I will put myself to penance, and so he brake his Sword in three pieces, and went towards the Holy Land, and abode there all the days of his life. Then said the Master to the Emperour, Lord understand ye what I have said : and he answered, right well. The Master said, if you put your Son to death for the words of your wife, it shall happen to you worse than it did to the Knight for his Grey-hound. The Emperour said, ye have shewed me a fair Example : without doubt this day my Son shall not die. Then said the Master, if you do so, you do wisely ; and I thank you, that you have spared him this day for my sake.

The second complaint of the Empress. A sorrow mingled with much cunning and falsehood.

When the Empress heard the Child was not yet dead, she began to weep bitterly, and sat her down on the earth in ashes, and

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would not lift up her head. When the Emperoz heard that, he entred the Chamber, and said unto her : O good wife wherefore make you all this sorrow, and trouble your self so much ? She said, ask ye that of me : know you not what shame I have suffered of your unhappy Son, and ye have promised me that you would see justice to be thereupon executed on him and yet he liveth ? Of a truth it will happen to you as to a Shepherd and a Boar. The Emperoz said, I pray you shew me that Example for my learning : she said yesterdays I shewed you one, and saw no good effect that came thereof : To what end shall I now do the like ? Nevertheless I shall declare this noble Example unto you, as hereafter you shall hear.

The second Example of the Empress.

There was some time an Emperoz which had a great Forrest, wherein was a wild Boar, so cruel and fierce, that he devoured men going through the Forrest. The Emperoz therefore being right heavy, proclaimed throughout his Dominions, That whosoever could slay the Boar, should have his only Daughter to his Wife, and the Empire after his death. As this was in all places proclaimed, there was not one man found that durst give the adventure. But there was a Shepherd, wha thought in himself, right I the Boar overcome and slay, I should

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not only advance my self, but also my generation and kindred. So he took his Shepherds staff in his hand, went to the Forrest, and as the Boar had of him a sight, he drew towards the Herdsman, but he for fear climbed into a Tree, and then the Boar began to bite and gnaw the



Tree, so that the Herd thought shortly he would have overthrew it. This Tree was loaden with plenty of fruit, and the Herd gathered thereof, and cast them to the Boar, insomuch that when he was filled therewith, he laid him down to sleep; which when the Herd perceived, he by little and little descended the Tree, and with the one hand clawed the Boar, and with the other held him about the Tree, and seeing the Boar slept very soundly, drawing out his knife

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I smote the Boar to the heart, and killed him, and shortly after wedded the Emperors Daughter: and after the death of her Father, he was made Empero^r. Then said she, My Lord, what ye not what I have said? he said, right well: Then said she, this mighty Boar betokeneth your most noble Person, against whom may no man withstand, neither by wisdom, nor strength. The Shepherd with his Staff, to the person of your ungracious Son, who with his Staff of cunning, beginneth to play with you, as the Herdsman claveth the Boar, made him sleep and after killed him. In the same manner, the Masters of your Son, by those false Fables and Narrations claw you, and close with you, untill your Son slay you, tha^t he may reign. Then said the Empero^r: God for^d bid they should do to me, as he did to the wild Boar; and he said unto her; this day my Son shall die; and she answered, if you do so, then do ye wisely. Then the Empero^r the second time sitting in judgment, commauded to lead him to the place of Execution appointed for that purpose. Whilist he was going, the second Master came before the Empero^r, doing him great reverence, as before he shewed in the coming of the first Master, to whom the second Master said: O my Lord and Empero^r, if you should slay your Son for the words of your wife, it shall happen worse to you, than it did

The Seven Wises

to a certain Knight, which for the wrongs of his wife was unjustly put upon the Pillory. The Emperoz said, O good Master, tell me how that happened: And he said, My Lord I shall not say it, unless you will call your onely Son from the death, until the Example be told, which if it turn not you from your purpose then your will be fulfilled: then the Emperoz commanded the Child should be called again: and after this manner following, the second Master began to tell:

The Example of the second Master.

IN a City was an ancient Knight, which wedded a young wife and fair, as you have done whom he loved above all earthly things: The Knight was a very circumspect and careful Husband, insomuch that every night he locked the door with his own hands, and laid the keys under his bed-head. In that City was a Law or Custom, that at a certain hour in the night a Bell was used to be rung, that after the ringing of the said Bell, if any man or woman were by the Watch-men found about the streets, all that night they should be kept in Prison, and on the morrow set upon the Pillory, that all people might behold them.

The said Knight had little lust of fleshly deeds, to reform the desires and appetites of his young

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Wife ; wherefore every night she had in her
amour, her Husband sleeping, took the keys
from under his Bed-head and went to her
Love ; and when she came again, laid the keys
under her Husband's head : and thus they played
many a time.

It happened upon a night that the Knight awaked from his sleep, and missed his wife, and the keys under his Bed-head, whereupon he rose up and went unto the doors, and found them open, the which he bolted fast within, and went up again into his Chamber, & looked out of the window towards the Street, and when it was near the third Cocks crow, his wife came from her best Beloved, and found the doore shut and bolted within : then was she sorrowful : Nevertheless she knocked to have come in. Then spake the Knight out of the window, O thou most wicked and unclean wife, now I know that many times thou hast taken my Bed, and gone and done adultery ; now thou shall stand until the Bell be rung, that the Watchmen may take thee, and do with thee according to the Law. His wife answered : My Lord, why do you lay that to me : For in very troth, the cause of my being abroad was for no ill, but I was by my Mothers Maid fetched in the night ; and when I saw you sleep so sweetly I durst not awake you, because you are old, and therefore I took the keys and went to

INTENTIONAL SECOND EXPOSURE

The Seven Wises

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my

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My Mother who is sore sick, that I fear to morrow she must be anointed, or anihilled; Not withstanding because I would not you offend, I have hasted again unto you, and have left her lying in great pain; therefore I pray you for the love of God, let me in before the Bell ringeth. The Knight answered: ye shall not come in, you must abide there until the Bell ringeth, and until the Watch-men come and take you: then said she, that would be to you, and to me, and unto all our friends and kindred a great shame; therefore for the reverence of Almighty God let me in. Then said he, have in thy mind, evil and false wife, how ofteentimes thou hast forsaken my Bed and done Adultery: it is much better thou suffer shame, and bewail for thy sins here in this world, than to suffer pain in Hell. She said again to him: I pray you for the love of him that was crucified, and dyed on the Cross, have mercy on me. The Knight said, thou labourest in vain, for thou shalt tarry the coming of the Watch-men. She hearing that, said: my Lord, ye know by this door standeth a well, if you let me not come in, I shall here drown my self, rather than all my friends should be ashamed for me: Then said he, would to God thou hadst been drowned long before thou camest in my Bed. As they thus spake the Moon went down, and all was very dark: Then said she, if it will be no other wise,

wife, I shall drown my self; but yet before, like a true Christian Woman, I will make my Testament: First, I bequeath to God my soul, and my body to be buried in the Church of St. Peter: and all other things and goods that God hath sent me, I give you, to dispose for my soul after your discretion. And when she had thus said, she went unto the Well, and there lying a great stone, with both her Arms she lift up, and said: Now I drown my self, and so cast the



stone down into the Well, and went again privately and stood by the door. The Knight hearing the noise, cryed with a very loud voice: Alas, alas, my sweet Wife is drowned, and hastily came down, and ran to the Well. And when he saw the door open, presently he entered, and

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locked the doo^r and went up into the Chamber, and lay and looked out of the Window. The Knight stood by the Well, and wept bitterly, and said : W^o to me, I have now lost my best beloved Wife ; cursed be the time that I made fast this doo^r against her. When the Lady heard that, she said : O thou cursed and old Greysard, why standest thou here at this time of the night ? Was not my body sufficient ? Wherefore do you go thus every night to your Harlots and leave my bed ? as he heard the voice of his Wife he was right glad, and said : Blessed be God that yet she is not drowned : But my good Lady, wherefore do you lay such things against me : I thought to have chastised you, and therefore I locked the doo^r, but in no wise I intended to your peril : ye know well what sorrow I made for you, when I heard you fall into the Well, and therefore I came, thinking to have helped you. Whereupon she said, thou liest, I never committed such faults as thou layest to me, but it appeareth by a common Proverb, he that is guilty or culpable himself of a sin judgeth every man to be in the same ; or else, the Father never sought the Son in the O^uen except he had been therein himself. In like case conceivest thou a false surmise of me : But one thing I promise thee, thou shalt abide there till the Watchmen come, and the Bell be rung that they may lead thee before the Judges, to abide

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abide and suffer the Law. Then said the Knight : Wherefore lay ye such things to me that am old, impotent, and unmeet to delight in such a Game ? I have dwelt long in this City, and never was defamed, therefore let me in, that to me ; or your self you do no shame. She said : Ye say in vain, it is better ye fore-think your sins in this World, then in Hell : Have in mind what the Wise man saith : A poor man, Proud, a rich man a Lyer, and an old man a Fool, God hateth : so be you, a Fool, and Rich. What need you to slander me, and cannot be content when ye have the flower of my youth at your pleasure, but yet runnest to Parlours, and therefore it is the great grace of God, that you have time to fore-think it, lest you should be damned for more sins ; therefore suffer some penance patiently. The Knight said : O my best beloved Lady, although it be so : God is merciful, and asketh nothing of a Sinner, but that he amend his life, and do penance for his sins. Now let me in, and I will make amends. She said : What Devil made you so good a Preacher ? but yet you come not in. As they thus spake, the bell rung ; then he intreated very fervently, saying : Now suffer me to come in, that I be not ashamed for ever. She answered, The ringing of the Bell doth portend the health of your soul. And as this was said, presently came the Watch-men about the City ; and

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and found the Knight standing in the street, and said to him: O good man, it is not good that ye stand here in this hour of the Night. As she heard this voice of the Watch-men, she said, Good Fellows, avenge me on that old accursed Whore-hunter, for ye know whose Daughter I am: this accursed old man is wont every Night to leave my Bed, and go to his whores, I have long forborn him, and would not complain on him to my friends, but I trusted that he would have amended his mis-rule, but it helpeth not: Therefore punish him after the Law, that all such old dotards may take example by him. Then the Watch-men took him, and all night chastised him in Prison, and on the morrow put him on the Pillory. Now said the Master to the Emperour, Lord have ye understood what I have said: and he said, right well. Then said the Master, if you put to death your Son by the instigation of your wife, it shall chance unto you worse than to the Knight.

The Emperour said, She was the worst woman that ever I heard of, that so falsly brought her Husband to shame and rebuke: I say Master, for this Example my Son shall not die this day. The Master said unto him, if you do so, you do wisely, and hereafter you shall joy: so I commit you to God, and thank you for your patient hearing, and sparing of your Son; and so he departed.

The

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The third complaint of the Empress, more full of cunning and sorrow than the former.

W^En the Empress heard the Child was not dead, she wept bitterly, and enter'd her privy Chamber, and toke her skin with her nails, and with a loud voice cryed, Alas, that ever I was born, that so great a King's Daughter should be thus intreated and shamed; and can have no remedy. Her Gentlewoman hearing this, went and shewed it to the Emperoz, and he went unto her, and comforted her, saying, O Lady, weep not so, for it behoveth you not. Who answered, the Love that I owe unto you, maketh me more sorrow than the contempt of death: for why, the inward love of your heart hath hitherto prohibited me, that I have not returned into my Country to my Father: But I fear should I do so, it might turn to your harm; for he is mighty to honour me with riches, and to revenge my quarrel in such wise as you might repent it. Whereunto said the Emperoz, let that pass out of your mind, nor repent it any more, for as long as I live I shall never fail you. And she said, Lord, I pray God you may long live: but I fear it may happen to you, as it befel to a Knight and his Son, that would not bury his Father's head in the Church-Yard, yet his Father died for him. Then said the Emperoz, shew me the Example, that he

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would not bury his Fathers head ; She said, I shall do it for your profit.

The third Example of the Empress.

In the City of Rome there was a Knight which had two Daughters and one Son. This Knight had such a delight in Hunting, Jousting and Tourney, that all things he might win and get in, he spent thereupon. In that time lived an Emperoz named Octavian, which in riches of Gold and Silver exceeded other Kings and Princes, in so much that he had a Tower full of Gold, and ordained a Knight to have the keeping and charge thereof. This Knight by Hunting, Jousting, and other idle Games, came to so great poverty, that he was forced out of the extremity of his adverse fortunes, to sell his heritage ; and called to him his Son, and said, my Son, it behoveth me of your counsel for necessity compelleth me to sell mine Heritage, or else to find some other way, whereby I may live : For if I should sell mine Heritage, you and your Sisters would perish. The Son said, Father, if you can find any manner of means, without selling your Heritage I should be ready to help you. The Father said, I have thought on a good counsel : The Emperoz hath a great Tower full of Gold ; at night-time let us with Instruments dig a hole through the Tower, and let us take of

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Gold as much as shall suffice us. Whereunto the Son answered, that counsel cannot be amended : for it is better of the Emperors Gold to take (to help us) than to sell our Heritage.



So they arose in the night, and went to the Tower, and with Instruments made an hole thorow the Wall, and took as much Gold as they could botch carry away at that time : And the Knight paid his debts, and haunted again Juffs as he did before, until all was consumed. In the mean while the Keeper of the Treasure went into the Tower ; and when he saw the Treasure stoln, and a great hole made thorow the wall, he began to wax sore afraid, and went unto the Emperoz, and shewed what had befel. To whom the Emperoz said all angry. What needs

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needs thou to shew me that? Have I not deli-
vered to thee my treasure? Therefore of thee I
will ask it. Anon as the Kēper heard that, he
went to the Tower again, and set before the
hole a great Vessel full of Pitch melted, with o-
ther Cins of subiley, that no man might come
in at the hōle, but he must needs fall into that
Vessel, and if he had therein fell, he could no
more come out of it. Not long after the Knight
had all the Gold consumed and spent, and went
again with his Son to steal more Gold: And
as the Father went in first, anon he was fal-
len into the Vessel full of Pitch to the neck;
and when he saw he was taken, and could not
get out, he said to his Son, follow me not:
for if thou dost, thou canst not escape by any
means. Then said the Son, God defend that I
should not help you: For if you are found we
are all dead; and if you may not be holpen by
me, I shall seek counsel how you may be deli-
vered. The Father said, there is no other coun-
sel but with thy Sword smite off my head, and
as my Body is found without an Head, no
man shall know me, and so thou and my
Daughters may escape this worldly shame
and death. The Son said: Father ye have
given the best counsel: For if it were so
that any man might perceive any knowledge
of you, none of us all shall escape death; and
it is expedient that your head be smitten off:

Anon

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Quon he drew out his ~~sword~~, and smote off his
 fathers head, and cast it into a Pit, and then
 went and shewed unto his Sisters all the mat-
 ter; who many days after privily bewailed the
 death of their Father. After this the Keeper of
 the Treasury came into the Tower, and found
 a Body without a Head: whereas he wondered,
 soe and shewed it unto the Emperor, to whom
 he said: Bind the Body to the Tail of an
 Horse, and so draw him thoro w all the streets
 of the City, and diligently take good heed if ye
 hear any cry or weeping: Wheresoever ye do
 hear that, he was Lord of the House; take all
 them and the Body, draw them to the Gallows
 and hang them. The which the Emperors
 Servants fulfilled according to his command-
 ment. And as they came against the House
 of the dead Knight, the Daughters seeing the
 Body of their dead Father, made a marvellous
 great shriek, and wept pitifully. And as their
 Brother heard that, he wounded himself with
 a knife, so that great plenty of blood came
 out of his wound: The Officers when they
 heard the cry, entred the House, and demanded
 the cause of their clamour. Then answered
 the Son, they lament because I am thus
 wounded; for when my Sisters saw the blood so
 abundantly go out, as you see, they began to
 weep and cry: and when the Officers saw the
 wound, they believed his words, and so went and

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hang'd the Knights Body upon the Gallows, where he hung along time, and his Son would neither take his Body down from the Gallows, nor yet bury his head. The Empress said, understand ye what I have said : the Emperoz said, right well.

The Declaration of the Example.

Then spake the Empress thus : My Lord, I fear it will so chance to you and to your Son : the Knight for the love of his Son was made poor, and first he committed Theft, and brake the Tower : secondly caused himself to be beheaded, that his Children should have no shame. After the Son cast his head into the Dike, and buried it not, neither in Church nor Church-yard ; and his body he suffered to hang still on the Gallows ; if he could not have taken it down in the day, he might well have done it in the night. In the same manner ye labour night and day, that ye may promote your Son to Honour and Riches, but without doubt he laboureth for your destruction, that he may reign after you in your Empire. Therefore I advise you speedily to take away his life, who living would suddenly prove the destruction of yours. The Emperoz said : you have shewed me a good Example. The Knights Son, when he had smitten off his Fathers head, would not bury it : Without doubt my Son shall not do so

to me. Then anon he commanded his Officers that they should lead him to the Gallows, and they all obeyed his commandment hastily. As they led him through the Streets the people made a great noise and lamentation, crying, Alas, alass, the only Son of the Emperoz is led again towards the Gallows; and as they led him, the third Master named Craton, came riding upon an Horse; and as the Child saw him, he bowed down his head to him, and as though he had said, have mind upon me. The people cryed, saying: O good Master make haste and save your Disciple; so he smote his Horse with his Spures, and hasted to the Palace. And when he came before the Emperoz, he honourably saluted him: Who said, thy coming hither shall nothing avail thee, for I think it long until I be avenged on thee. The Master repliyed, I hoped at my coming to have been welcome, and to have had a better reward, and not so to be rebuked. The Emperoz said, as ye have deserved, so shall it be to you. To whom he said, my Lord, what have I deserved? The Emperoz said, ye right well deserve death: for I delivered you my Son well speaking, and well mannered, to be informed and taught, and ye have delivered him again unto me dumb, and a Ribauld. To which the Master answered: in that you say he is dumb, that I commit to God; For he maketh

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the dumb to speak and heaf to hear: But in that you say he would have inforced your Wifē, that should I gladly know, if any creature hath sēn that: for there is no malice above the malice of a woman, and that I shall prove by a good Example, that a woman is full of falsehood and unknown deceipt: and if you put to death your Son for the words of your wife, it shall happen unto you as it did to a Noble-man and his Wifē, and his Pye, which he loved maruelously. To whom the Emperoz said, I pray you tell me how that women are full of malice and leasings, who said I shall not shew it; but if you will first call again your Son from death, then at your pleasure I shall shew the Example. Then the Emperoz made his Son to be called again and put in Prison. And the Master began to tell the Example in manner following.

The Example of the third Master.

There was in a City a rich Burgess that had a Pye, which he loved so well, that every day he taught her to speak Latin and Hebrew; and when he had learned her perfectly to speak these two languages, all that she saw and heard, she shewed and told her Master.

This young man had a fair young Wifē, as ye have, the which he loved full well, but she on the contrary loved him not, because he was not of that lascivious performance, to answer her Lusts

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Lusts according to her desires : Therefore she had another young man , that she loved above her Husband : And always as her Husband was out of the Town, about his Merchandise and other busines, she sent for her best beloved, that they might make good cheer together. The



Pye as she espied that , told it to her Master at his coming home, in such a manner as the noise ran all over the City of her Adultery ; wherefore her Husband many times bewailed and chid with her ; she answered him, ye believe your cursed Pye , which as long as she liveth, will alway make betwixt us variance and discord : and he said the Pye cannot lye ; For what she saeth and heareth, that she telleth me and therefore I believe her more than you.

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It so foynded that this man went into a far Country about his Merchandise, and as soon as he was gone, his Wife sent for her Friend and Lobe, to solace and make good cheer with him: but he durst not come by day-light, but abode until the Evening, lest he should be seen of the people, and when the Night was come, he knocked at the Gate, and she was ready and spended it. He said, I fear that the cursed Pye shall accuse me; for by her is come great slander upon us thozow all the City. Enter in, she said, boldly and fear not. As they should pass thozow the Hall, where the Pye was in her Cage, she heard him say these words, O my most beloved, I fear me greatly, lest that the Pye should betray us: and as the Wife heard that, she said, be still fool, it is dark she may not see you. Then the Pye hearing that, said, if I see thee not, I hear thy voice, and thou dost wrong to my Master, for thou sleepest with my Mistress: and when my Master cometh, I shall tell him. The young man hearing that, said, told I not you, that the Pye would discover us: and the Wife said, fear not, for this Night we will be avenged on the Pye, and so they entered into the Chamber, and slept together that night. About mid-night the Wife arose, and called her Maid, and said, fetch me a Ladder; and set it up to the roof of the House, that I may avenge me on the Pye. The Maid did so,

and

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and they went up both, and made a hole through
the covering of the house right over the Pye,
and there thow cast Sand, Clay, Stones, and
Water upon the Pye, insomuch that the poor
Pye was almost dead. And on the morrow the
young man went out early at the back door.
When the good man was come home, as his
custom was, he went and visited the Pye, and
said to her, O Pye, my beloved Bird, tell me
how thou hast fared the while I have been out.
She said, Master, I will tell you tidings that
I have heard: Your wife as soon as you were
gone, by the night time she let a man come in;
and as soon as I heard that, I told him that I
should shew it you at your coming home, yet she
led him into her Chamber, and slept with him
all night: You ask me also how I have done
in your absence, and I say to you of a truth
that I was never so nigh my death; as I was
that same night, with Snow, Hail, and Rain,
that fell upon me so long together, that I
was almost left for dead. The wife when
she heard that, said to her husband: Sir, you
believe your Pye, now you may hear what she
saith, she complaineth that in the same night
there fell so much Snow, Hail, and Rain upon
her, that she was almost dead: And yet there
was none of them that same night, for there
was not in the year a clearer and fairer night
than it was: and therefore from henceforth be-

lieve

The Seven Wife

lieve her not. Then went the good man to his
Neighboours, and asked of them if in that night
were any Tempest or Rain: they answered
and some of them walked that night, and in all
that year there was not seen a fairer night. Then
went he to his house and said to his wife, I have
found you in a truth, for the night was very
fair and clear, as I understand of your Neigh-
boours. You may now know of a truth, said the
that they Pye is a lier with her leasings, she
hath sown much discord betwixt us: Moreover
I am defamed through the City by her false lea-
sing. Then the Burgess went unto the Pye
and said; wherefore hast thou made lies betwixt
me and my wife: is this the thanks I have for
the meat that I was wont to give thee with
mine own hands every day: and thou hast there-
by brought my wife into great disgrace through
all the City. The Pye answered, God know-
eth I cannot lie, for that which I saw and have
heard I shewed you. Then said he, thou liest,
thou hast said unto me, that in the same night
was hail, snow, and rain, that thou hast near
hand lost thy life, which is false, and therefore
from henceforth thou shalt make no more leas-
ings nor discord betwixt me and my wife; and
so took the Pye and brake her neck.

When as the Wife saw that, she was glad
and said: now thou hast done well; now may
we all our days live in rest and peace. And when

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when he had slain the Pye, he look'd up and saw in the top of his house a Ladder and a Vessel with water, sand, and stones : and when he beheld that, he perceived the falsehood of his wife, and cryed with a loud voice : wo to me, that for my wifes words I have slain my Pye, and also my solace and joy is lost, the which in all things said to me truth. And as he had thus done, and for sorrow he left his Merchandise, and all his house and went towards the Holy Land, and never returned home again to his wife. Then the Master said to the Emperoz, Sir, have you understood what I have said, he answered, right well. The Master said, was not this a cursed wife, that so by her falsehood, deceit and cunning, caused the Pye to be slain ; the Emperoz said, in troth she was full of falsehood : it pitieth me greatly to think upon the Pye, which for her true saying lost her life. Verily I say unto you that you have told me a very fair Example, wherefore this day my Son shall not die. Then said the Master, Sir, you do wisely; and I thank you that you have spared your Son this day for my sake, and so to God I commend you.

The Fourth complaint of the Empress.

W^EHEN the Empress heard that the Child was not dead, she made great noise, and crying in such wise, that she was heard thoroew the Palace, and said ; wo unto me that ever I was

The Seven Wise

was made Empress; wchuld to God I had di
when I was first brought into these par
When the Emperoz heard that cry that I
made, he entred into the Chamber, and con
forted her as much as he could, and demanded
the cause of her lamentation. Who said: O
mine own Lord, have you no wonder, thought
that I be in this sorrow and agony; for I am
your Wife and in your company, by your Son
I am ashamed; ye saw lately the bloody mark
of his iforcement upon my tender flesh, and
you have promised me, that he therefore shou
be hanged, and yet he liveth: wherefore shou
I not be sorry? The Emperoz answered: I
content and I shall do justice upon my Son
morrow: I forboze him yesterdays, at the mi
ting of one of his Masters by an Example
Then said she, have you forbid to do justice for
one word? were it so, yet for a word ye shou
not let to do justice: and ye say, for the Example
of one Master ye have left it. I fear me
shall happen to you and your Masters, as upon
a time it fortuned unto an Emperoz with
his seven wise Masters. The Emperoz said
I pray you tell me that Example. She said
to what intent should I labour in vain? For
yesterday I shewed you a good Example, and
availed not; and whatsoever I shew you for ho
nour and profit, that the Masters of your Son
tend to your destruction; as in the present
Example

MASTER S.

Example, I shall clearly shew unto you. To whom the Emperoz said : O my best beloved Lady, shew me that Example, by the same I may beware ; for though in my clemency I gave one day's benefit of life to my Son, I shall not therefore give him his life ; for what's deferr'd is not forgotten. She said, gladly shall I shew it to your profit, and began to tell as followeth.

The fourth Complaint of the Empress

Sometimes there was in the City of Rome, Seven Wisse Masters, by whom the Empire was governed ; and the Emperoz that then was, did never attempt any thing without the counsel of his Masters ; whereupon they perceiving that the Emperoz was so affected to them, that without them he would not ordain or do any thing devised by their Arts and cunning, that the Emperoz should clearly see as long as he was in the Palace, but as soon as he was out, he should become blind ; and so did they that they might the more freely have the dealing themselves of all things that appertained to the Emperoz ; by which they won great profit and lucre of goods : and after they had wrought the experiment, they could never change it, nor undo it afterwards : But the Emperoz abode still blind many years : And the Seven Masters made and proclaimed throughout the Em-

Empire, that if any man had dreamed a dream he should come into them with a Florent of Gold or Silver, and they would expound the interpretation of his Dream : whereby, and by other unjust means, they obtained much more substance and money of the people then the Emperoz did. So upon a time, when he sat at the Table with his Empress, he began to sigh and sorrow in himself, and when she perceived that, she enquired diligently of him the cause. The Emperoz said, should it not be heavy and sorrowful unto me, that I so long have been blind, and cannot see out of my Palace, and yet find no remedy : to whom spake the Empress and said : Lord hear my counsel, and it shall never repent you, if you did thereafter. In your Court you have seven Wise Masters, by whom ye and all the Empire are governed ; if you mark, ye shall find they are the cause of your blindness : and if it be so, they are worthy to dye a most shameful death : Therefore had my advice, first send for them, and shew to them your infirmity, and threaten them on their lives that they should find some speedy remedy to help you of your sickness and blindness. This Counsel pleased the Emperoz well. And anou he sent for the Masters, and when they were come, the Emperoz shewed unto them his infirmity, and blindness, and charged them on pain of death, that they should presently seek some remedy to ease

MASTER

take hit thereof. Then answered they : The desire of us a thynge that is difficult to be done thus shottly, but give us respite for two dayes, and we will give you your full answer. The Emperour was therre wthal well contented. Then the Seven Wisse Masters went unto Counsel how they myght restore him his sight again, and in no wise could they find the means how to put away the blindness from the Emperoz : Wherefore they were all right sorrowful, and said among themselves : Without we finde a remedy, we are all but dead men. So they throughout all the Empire soughe if they could finde any remedy or Counsel therefore. It happened upon a time going through the City, in the mid of thereroft they found Children playing, and after them came a man with a Talent of Florene of Gold, and said to them, Good Masters, this night have I dreamed a Dream, the interpretation whereof I would fain know : Wherefore I play you shew me what it signifieth, and I take the Gold to you. That heard one of the Children (that played amongst the other) who said unto him, give me the Gold, and I will expound you the Dream. The man said: I dreamed this Night, that in the mid of mine Orchard was a great Spring of Water, whereof came many small Springs, that all mine Orchard was full, and overbowen with water. The Child said, take a

The Seven Wises

Spade, and dig in the same place, where you thought that the water Sprung out, and there shall ye find a hoard of Gold, so great, that you and your Children, and Lineage shall be for ever rich. The man did as the Child had shewed him, and found the Treasure. Then went the man to the Child, and meted him a pound weight of the Gold that he had found, for the interpretation of the Dream: but he would receive none, but committed him to the Prayers of the man. The Seven Wise Masters, when they heard the Child had so wisely expounded the Dream, they spid to him, good Child, what is your name? He answered, I am called Merlin. Then said the Masters, we see surely great wisdom in you; we shall shew you a great matter, of which we would gladly find a remedy. The Child said, shew me your matter. And they said the Emperoz of Rome, as long as he is in the Palace, hath his sight ver y clear without any impediment; but as soon as he is gone out of the Palace, he cannot see. Show if you can find the cause thereof, and give present remedy whereby he may be eased, and have his sight, we shall have a great Reward and Honour of the Emperoz. Then answered the Child, I know as well the cause of the blindness as the remedy. Then said all unto him, come with us unto the Emperoz, and you shall be rewarded so largely, that ye shall

be

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The Seven Wises

and your Empire, and have made you blind :
ye be without your Palace, that they your Subjects
by extortion might kill and pole, you no
seeing it. But they know not the Remedy
therefore hear now my counsele, and this Will



shall be quenched and extinct : Strike off the
first Masters Head, and anon you shall see the
first Spring quenched, and so by order one after
another till they are all beheaded, and among
the Springs with the Well shall be quenched
and ye shall have your sight, as ye had before
and when this was done, the Well with the
seven Springs was vanished. And as the Em-
peror had his sight again, he made the Chi-
a great Lord, and gave him great abundance
of goods. Then spake the Empress, My Lord

have ye well perceivyn this Example, that I
have tolde you : and he said, yea, in the best wise,
and ye have recited a worthy and good Example.
Then said he : in the same manner your Seven
wise Masters intend to do with you with their
false Narration, that your Son may reign over
your Empire, which God forbid.

THE DECLARATION OF THE EXAMPLE.

This well is your Son, whereout floweth
Seven springs, that signifieth the Seven wise
Masters : which Son you may not destroy,
without the Seven wise Masters be brought to
nought : that done, this well, that is your Son,
with all his wiles, shall not escape, but let him
taste of death, (which befits his shameful de-
serts, lest he have a help of his Masters) and so
after consequently the Seven Masters, and so
you shall governe and guide your Empire for
peace and rest. The Emperoy anon commanded
his Servantes to lead his Son to the Gallows,
which they were loath to do. Then a great
multitude of people gathered with great noise
and bewailing, so that the fourth Master named
Malquidrake heard thereof, who leape upon his
Horse and hasted to the Palace, where he met
with his Disciple, and commended him unto
him ; and when he came before the Emperoy,
and did his obeysance, the Emperoy said : Little

3. The Sevene Wises

thanks shall you have for my curse. Catif
 for so ill teaching my Son. I delivered you my
 Son well speaking, and in all things right
 vertuous; but you have sent him home a greate
 dumblond a Ribauld, so he woulde have lain
 with my wife by force; and therefore all my
 forthwith shall be hang'd. Then said the Ma-
 ster, my Lord I have not deserved so ill of
 you, God knoweth why your Son speake-
 not, in short time you shall perceive other
 things, but the time is not yet come: your son
 he woulde have oppresed your wife, that is no
 truthe, nor proved; for neither for one singuler
 person should you judge your Son to death. For
 for the wordes of your wife you judge your
 Son to die, it shall be worse to you then to a cer-
 tainold man and his wife, and that I shall
 well prove. To whom the Emperour said: I
 think you do with me, as sometimes seven
 wise men did to an Emperour. Whereupon said
 the Master, the essence of one, nor of emperours
 may not sound to the rebuke of all other: but
 one thing of a truthe I shall shew you, that
 evill shall come to you, if ye this day put your
 Son to death for the wordes of your wife, of
 which I could shew a notable Example. Then
 said the Emperour, recite it. The Master
 said, if you will call your Son from death,
 then will I rehearse the Example, or else not.
 The Emperour commanded he shoulde be called

again

against and desired the Master to say so. Where-
after followeth a tract for man and
woman also against the same Master, in
which The Example of the fourth Master.

There was an old Knight, and a right wise
man that lived long without wife or Child.
His Friends oftentimes exhorted him to take a
wife.

The Knight thus counselled by his Friends,
at last agreed unto them, and they gave him to
wife the Daughter of the Provost of Rome,
that was rich and of comely feature; whom,
when he saw he began to love marvellously
well, and when he had been married a certain
space and had no Child; in the morning it hap-
pened that she went to the Church, where she
met with her Mother, who said: My Daugh-
ter, how pleaseth you your Marriage and your
Husband? She said: Right nile, for you haue
given me an old lame man, to my discontent-
ment in all respects, and I would you had the
same cime buried me; for I had rather lye and
eat with the Swine, than with him, therefore I
may no longer thus endure, but I must needs
lose another. Then said the Mother: God
forbid my dear Daughter: How long haue I
been with your Father, and yet never mea-
led with such foolishness? The Daughter
said: it is no marvel, for you both nae in

2 The Seven Wives

your youtch together, and the one took solace of the other, but I can of him receive no manner of corporal pleasure, for he is cold, and on the Bed he lieth as still as a stone, or as a thing immovable. The Mother answered: If you love another, tell me what he is. The Daughter said I will love a Priest: to whom the Mother said: It were better and less sin for you to love a Knight or a Squire: She said in short time he would be weary of me, and after do me shame, and so will not the Priest; for he will keep his own honour and Counsel, as well as mine: and Spiritual men be moze true to their Lovers than Secular men be. The Mother said: hear my counsel it will be for your good: old folks are wiley and fell; tempt your Husband first, and if you escape him without doing you harm or smiting, then love the Priest. The Daughter said, I may not so long abide the Mother said: Upon my blessing abide till you have probed. The Daughter said, upon your blessing I will abide till I have attempted: But first tell me how I shall prove him: the Mother said, he hath in his Orchard a Tree which he loveth much, cause it to be smitten down whilz he is a Hunting, and against his coming home, make him a fire therewith; and if he forgive you, then love the Priest. As she heard the counsel of her Mother she went home: to whom her Husband said, where habest you

you been so long a while remebered? I have been
at the Church, where I spake with my Mother,
and with her I have had a little talk: and so be-
gan properly to dissemble. After midday the
Knight rode forth to hunt, then she thinking
upon the counsel of her Mother, went to the
Gardiner and said: cut down this young Tree
newly planted, that I may make a fire thereof
to warm my Lord withal, at his coming from
Hunting, for it is a great wind, sharp and cold.
The Gardiner said, Madam, that I will not
do for my Lord loveth this Tree better than he



doth all the other Trees, nevertheless I shall
gather wood enough to make a good fire, but in
any case this I will not he mdown. As she heard
that, then boldly she took the Ax from the Gar-
diner,

Winer, and he went to his wife Tree herself, and made the Gardiner with others to bear it home. At Evening when her Lord came from Hunting, he was very cold, and she made a great fire and went to meet him, and set him a stool before the fire to warm him; and as he a little while had sitten, he perceived the odour of the fire, and called the Gardiner, and said, I smiel by this odour that the new Plant burneth in the fire: the Gardiner said, Lord it is true, my Lady your Wife hath felled it down. The Knight said unto her, God forbid that my Plant should be cut down by you. She answered anon: Lord I have done it, knowing the weather and you also cold, and therefore I have sparinged this fire for your comfort. And as the Knight heard that, he looked angrily upon her, and said: O cursed woman, how wast thou so obdurate relentless and void of pity, as to have down so gentle a young Tree, the which thou knowest it well, that I loved it above all my other Trees? When he had so said, she began to weep and excuse her self, and said: my Lord, I have done it for your good, and do you take it grievously? and began to cry, wo, wo be to me. Anon as the Knight saw the weeping of his wife, and heard the cause, he was moved with pity and said unto her, cease your weeping and beware how you anger me any more; or trouble me in any thing I love. The next day early in

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in the morning she went again to the Church
yard, and met with her Mother coming home,
and they saluted each other. Then the Daughter
said unto the Mother: O dear Mother, I
will love the Priest, for I have attempted my
Lord, as you counselled me, but all for nought,
for he anon forgave it, when he saw me a little
weep. Then said the Mother, though old men
for one time forgive, they double the pain anoth-
er time, and therefore I counsel you, that
you yet once again tempt him. Then said the
Daughter: I may no longer abide, for I suffer
so much pain for the love of the Priest, that
with my tongue I cannot tell it; therefore you
shall pardon me, I will no more follow your
counsel. Then said the Mother: for the love
that the Child should have unto the Mother,
attempt him yet once more for your Father's
blessing; and then if you go quietly without
harm or beating, love the Priest in the name
of God. Then answered the Daughter, it is to
me great pain so long to abide; nevertheless
for the blessing of my Father, I will once more
attempt him. But tell me how I shall begin.
The Mother said, I understand that he hath a
little Hound that he loveth well and keepeth by
his bed, cast the Hound with great might (before
his face) against the wall that it die; and if you
escape without a stripe, or he forgive it lightly,
then in the name of God love the Priest: The
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Daughter

The Seven Wiles

Daughter said, I will in all things do after your counsel, for there is no Daughter living at this day, that would more gladly have the blessing of Father and Mother than I: And so she bad her Mother fare wel, and went home again; and that day with great trouble of her heart she brought to the night: And when the night was come, she commanded the Bed to be covered with Purple and Cloth of Gold, whilst the Knight sat by the fire; and when the Bed was made ready, the little Hound as he was accustomed, leapt upon the Bed, and she took him by the hinder legs, and with a malicious heart she cast him against the Wall, that it lay still dead. When the good old Knight saw that, he was marvelous angry, and said with a loud voice to his Wife: O thou most cruel and spightful of all wicked Women, how couldst thou find in thine Heart to kill that gentle Hound, that I loved so much? Lord, said she, have you not seen how he with his feet (coming out of the mire) bewrayed our Bed that is so pretiously covered with rich Cloaths. And the Knight said with much anger: Know you not that I loved much better my little Hound than the Bed? When she heard that, she began pitiously to weep, and said: Who be to me that ever I was born, for all things that I do for the best, are turned to the worst. The Knight out of the treasure of his pity would

not

not suffer the weeping of his wife, but for that he loved her so well, said unto her: cease your weeping, for I forgive it you altogether; and I counsel you, beware how you displease me from henceforth: And so they went to bed together.

Upon the morrow she very early went to the Church, where she met with her Mother, to whom when she had done reverence, as it behoved, she said: Mother, now will I love the Priest, for I have attempted my Husband the second time, and all things he hath suffered. The Mother said, O my dear Daughter, there's no cruelty or falsehood above the cruelty of old folks, and therefore once more prove him. To whom the Daughter answered: Mother you labour in vain; for if you will know, and how much pain I suffered for the Priest's love, you should help me if you love me. The Mother said, hear me Daughter this time, and I shall never let you more: think how you have sucked milk out of my Breasts, and the great pain I suffered at your Birth: By these pains, my dear Daughter, I charge you, deny not this good Petition, and I promise you no more to let you, nor hinder you of your content, but rather to help you. Then answered the Daughter, it is to my great pain to abstain so long from the love of the Priest: Nevertheless for the great charge you have laid to me, and for

2 The Seven Whissem

that ye have made a Womme work called me
but to further me: Tell me how I might at-
tempt him, and I shall once more adveneure.
The Mother said, I knew on Sunday next he
intendeth to have us all to Dine, your Fa-
ther and I, and all your Friends, with all the
rest of the City; and when you are set in your
place, and all the Meats are brought and ferner
upon the Table, fassen your keyes privily, than
hang at your Girdle, in the Table-Cloth, and
then feign to have forgotten your knife, and say
these words openly: See what a short while I am
off, I have forgotten my knife in my Chamber!
And then rise up hastily, and go, and the Cloth
with all the Meats you shall overthrow upon
the ground, and if you escape without pain, I
make a bow to God, I shall never let you after.
The Daughter said; that shal I gladly do,
and so took her leave and departed. The Feast
day came and all (as the Mother said) was done
the Servants covered the Table, all ate seing
and the Daughter set overagainst her Lord; and
when the Table was well servit with Meats
and other things belonging, the Lady of the
House said with a loud voice: See how forget-
ful I am, I have left my knife in my Chamber,
which I must fetch. And so rose up hastily and
drew the Cloth with all the Meat upon her
with her, with all the Gold Vessels and the
Dishes fell upon the ground, and The Knight
waxed

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were some angry Meats, but dispensing before the Guests, and commanded another Cleek and other Meats to be brought; and with joy saluted his Guests to eat, and make good cheer, so that they were all merry. The Feast, or Dinner done, they all gave thanks to the Knight, and took their leaves, every man towards his own House. Upon the next day, in the morning, the Knight rose early, and went to the Church to hear Service; after which he went to the Barber, and said unto him, Sir, are you expert in blood-letting, in what vein I will desire you? And he said, Sir I am expert in what vein you can name in a Mans Body. The Knight said, I am content, come with me. And when he was come into the House he entered his Chamber where his wife lay in bed, and said unto her, Wife, up quickly. Then said she, what shall I do up so early, it is not nine of the clock? The Knight said, you must rise up, for you must be letten blood in both your arms. She said, I was never letten blood, and shall I now bleed? then said the Knight, that is truth, and therefore you are a fool. Remember, first, you hewed down my Tree, another time you killed my little Hound; and but yesterday, you shamed me before all my Friends and Parents. If I should suffer than this, for to go on, you would for ever shame me. The cause hereof I consider, you have

The Seven² Wife

have evil and wild blood within your body; an
therefore I will that the corrupt blood be drawn
out, that ye from henceforth shall put me to n
more shame and anger: so caused to be made
great fire and she stood and cryed; and held up
her hands towards Heaven, and said; My Lord
forgive my trespass, and have pity on me a
this time, and I will never more offend you.
The Knight said, pray for no mercy; for the
mercy that God hath wrought towards thee a
this present, is this, that except thou holdest
thine Arm straight, I shall soon have thine heare
blood; and said to the Barber, smite heard and
make a deep hole in her Arm, or I shall give
you a great stripe; then smote the Barber so
sore, that the blood came abundantly out, and
the Knight would not suffer him to stench it
until the time that she changed her colour in her
Visage; and as this was done, he had it to
be stopped; and willed the Barber to smite
the vein upon the other Arm: Then she cryed
with a very loud voice; My sweet Husband
pray have compassion on me, for now I die.
The Knight answered, Wife, you should have
thought on this before, ere you had done to me
these three despites. Then she held out her
left Arm, and the Barber smote thereon a
great hole, that the blood came out right ugly;
and he suffered her to bleed till her Visage was
changed, and she swooned: Then said the

Knight

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night before surbnd her: And when it is
and saffato her: who go to be and styp, and
hink henceforth to amende your se, or I shall
have the blood of your heart. As this was done
he gafe the Barber his reward, and he went
again to his own House, and his wife being
inder the hands of her Spaw, alid dead, was
led to her bed: she made one of her Maides go
to her Mother in haffes, and say, that I desire
her to come and speake with me before I die: The
Mother when she heard that, was glad of the
correacion of her Daughter, and came hastily
to her. When the Daughter heard her Mother
she said: O my sweet Mother, I am almost
dead, for I have bled so much that I believe I
shall not escape death; Then answered the Mo-
ther: said I not that old men are right cruel,
will ye now love the Priest, & he said, the
Devil may the Priest confound, I will never
love other but my Husband. Then said the Ma-
ster to the Empereur, What have you under stood
me: He answered right well, for among all I
have heard, this was the best Example. These
evil deeds she did to her Husband; and I doubt
not, if she had done the fourth, she would have
shamed him for ever. Then said the Master,
therefore I counsel you, that you beware of your
Wife, lest it happen wroste to you, which ap-
pears manifestly in this Example, if you
put to death your only Son for her wroide,

you shall be i vied in the end, and forre he
shall repent it. The Emperoz said: truly af
ter this day in Son shall not die. The Emp
said: My Lord, I thank you, that you for
sake this day have spared your only Son, and

The fifth Complaint of the Empress.

The Empress hearing that Child was un
dead, forthwith appelleth her self, and
caused the Willans to be in readines, as though
she would have gone into her own County
her Father, to complain of the great than
was done her, and yet could have no remed
The Servants seeing that she went to the Em
peroz that the Empress was going into the
County, whether she perceiued that he went
her, saying, whither are you going? I hope
you had loved me, for in all the World you
would have sought no solace but with me. At
which she said: that is veray, and therfore I go
from you, for I had rather hear of your dea
than see your die: Your delight so much to hear
these Masters, that it shall happen to you, as
did to Octavian the Emperoz, the which was i
caveteus, that the Roblemen of the Emperoz
buried him quick, and filled his mouth full
molten Gold. The Emperoz said: dear wife
do not so, that the blame on you and me be ne
laid. Then said the Empress truly Sir, the
blame is yours, for have you not promisid me

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many times your Son shall die, yet he liveth; therefore I will no more believe. Then said the Emperoz, it becometh not a King every cause lightly to discuss without great advice, especially upon his Son, on whom it is not meet, but upon deliberation and good counsel to pass judgment; Therefore I pray you tell me somewhat by which I may govern my life, for it is the destruction of a King, without advice, and undiscertly to give judgement. She answered, I will gladly tell you a notable Example, so that henceforth you will not be desirous to hear the Masters; and began in this form following.

The fifth Example of the Empress.

Octavianus the Emperoz reigned in Rome, right Rich and Covetous, and above all things he loved Gold. The Citizens of Rome at that time did much harm, and many great outrages to other Nations, insomuch that divers Regions were moved against the Romans. In that time was Master Virgilius, the which excelled in Magick and other Sciences all other Masters: the Citizens prayed him that by his Art he would devise, how they of their Enemies might have warning beforehand, whereby they might provide for themselves the better. And made by his Cunning

a Tower, and on the Tower did cause to be set
as many Images, as in all the world were
Regions and Provinces, and in the midst of the
Tower an Image, which held in his hand a
Apple, or a great round Ball of Gold. And he be-
持 Image of the Tower held in his hand a lit-
tle Bell, and stood turning and looking towards
his own Province to him assigned; and as of-
ten as any Province would rebel against the
Romans, so often turned he to the Images of the
Land, and ringing the Bell; that hearing, the Ci-
tizens of Rome armed themselves, and so that
Province hasted with all their might the same
to subdue: so there was no Land so great that
could break them upon the Romans, and where-
fore were they feared over all the world. Also
that Father Virgil made for the comfort of the
poor people a Light that always burned; and by
that light he made two Bathes, the one of them
hot, in which the poor people might bathe, and
wash themselves: and the other cold in which
they might themselves refresh. Between the
Light and the Bathes, he made an Image, stan-
ding, in whose fore-head was written, He that
smitech me, shall anon have vengeance. The Im-
age stood there many years, and at last came
Clerk and beheld the Image, and read the wri-
ting, and thought in himself, what vengeance he
might find; wherefore I do believe better,
any man smite thee, and thou fallest there with

to the earth, he shall incant ite Covenanted
by feet; and therefore in the writing, that
no man should have it. And the Clerk lift up
his hand and gave the Image a great stroak,
that it fell to the ground: and upon the Light
was out and the Bishes were vanished away,
and he found no treasure. - The poor Folkes
perceiving that were all sorrowful, and laid
their curses and complaints upon him, that for
his singular Covetousness had destroyed the Im-
age, and robbed them of so great a Solace.
Hereafter assembled thre Kings, which by the
Romans had suffered great wrongs, and meane
to take counsel how they might be avenged of
the Romans; and some of them said: we laboure
in vain, for as long as there standeth the Tower
with the Images, we cannot do any thing a-
gainst them.

At the Counsel arose four Knights, and said:
We have thought on a remedie how to destroy
the Tower with the Images, and that to do,
we will lay our lives to pledge, if you will be
at the cost. Then answered the Kings: what
cost shall we be at; they answered: Four
Tun of Gold. Then said the Kings: take the
Gold, and fulfil your promise. The Knights
took the Gold, and went towards Rome: and
when they came thither in the night, without
one of the Gates, in the Ditch full of water,
they drowned one of the Kings with the Gold.

in it, and another Tun they drowned by the second gate, and the third Tun they drowned by the third gate, and the fourth Tun by the fourth gate ; and when they had thus done, early in the morning they entred into the City at an hour convenient : and as the Emperoz went ober to the Market they did him reverence. The Emperoz seeing them, demanded from whence they were, of what Science, and what service they could do. They answered : We are all of far Countries, and Southsayers so perfect, that there is never a thing so privily hid, but we shall find it out by our Dreams. We have heard that ye labour and have pleasure in such things and therefore we come unto you to know if you have need of our service : the Emperoz said, I will prove you ; and if it be, that I find you true, you shall have of me great rewards and thanks. They said, we ask nothing but the half of the Gold which by us shall be found : the Emperoz said, I am well content. And thus they had with the Emperoz many words. At Right when the Emperoz was going to bed, they said unto him : My Lord, if it please you, this Right shall the eldest of us set his Meaning awoke and Dream : The third day he shall shew you his Dream, and what it signifieth. The Emperoz said : Go in Gods Name. And they went forth with great gladnesse and this Right they passed with great joy and

and quickly upon them they returned to him for a good purpose. When the third day was come, they went early to the Emperoz ; the first said to my Lord, please you to go with us without one of the Gates of the City ; and I will shew him where there is a Tun full of Gold hid ; the Emperoz said, I shall go with you and see if it be true that you say. And when they were come to the place they drew out the Tun, that they before there had put ; the Emperoz when he saw that, was glad and gave them their part. Then said the second Dreamer : My Lord, this night shall I Dream ; then the Emperoz said, God give you a good Dream ; the next night came and he took out the other Tun and gave it to the Emperoz, it took also his share. In the like manner the third and the fourth ; upon which the Emperoz was out of all measure joyous, and said : he had not seen such true and expertouth-sayers, or Dreamers as they were. Then said they all of them together, as it had been out of one mouth : my Lord, we have all one after another dreamed, the which you have seen, they be all proved : but now if it please you that we dream altogether this night, we trust that to us shall be shewed, that we shall find a greare quantity of Gold and Riches. The Emperoz said, give you a good Dream which to me shall be most profitable. On the next morrow came again unto the Emperoz, and said unto

honesty, contentance, fulnes of joy; & proproue, well bring good and profitable thinges; for this night in our Clerks, so great a Treasurage is to us the way, the which if you will suffer it to be sought you shall be so incited, that in this world none shall be like unto you. The Emperor said: Where shall we find this Treasurage? they said, under the foundation of the Tower that the Images stand upon. The Emperor answered, God defend I should for love of Gold destroy the Tower with the Images, wherewith we from our Enemies be defended and warred. They said to him again; my Lord have you found us in our sayings otherwise than true? the Emperor said, Nay, O Lord (said they) we with our own hands shall give out the Gold, without hurting the Tower, or the Images. And it is expedient (that secretly in the night) by us it be done, for dread of rescue and concourse of the people, lest that it should run in the clamour of them, and they take that good Gold away from you and us. The Emperor said: go in the name of God and do your best as you will, or can, and I shall to morrow early come to you. Then went they with gladness, and in the night were let into the Tower, and then with great haste and diligence they undermined it; and on the next day, very early in the morning, mounted up on their Horses, and rode again towards their own

own Country with joy and glosse, and ore they
came without the sight of Rome, the Tower
fell down on the morning ensuing. When it
was fallen, and the Senators it perceived, they
sacred greatly, and there was a great br-
uailing throughout all the City; and they went
unto the Emperor and said : Lord, how may
it be that this Tower is thus fallen, by the
which we have always had warning afore of
our enemies : he answered and said, to me came
four false deceivers, and feigned themselves to
be South-sayers, and that they could find Treas-
ure in the ground : and said, that under the
foundation of the Tower was hidden an inu-
merable sum of Gold, the which they shold un-
dermine without hurting the Tower and I-
mages : I gave faith to them, and they have de-
ceived me. They answered : ye have desired
so much Gold that for your unsatiate covetous-
ness we shall all be destroyed : but first your
covetousness shall fall upon your self. Then
they took him and led him to the Capitol, and
laid him on his back, and poured his mouth full
of molten Gold ; saying to him, you have de-
sired Gold, and therefore you shall drink Gold :
and after that they buried him quick. Not
long after that came the Enemy against the
Romans, and overcame and destroyed them
all.

Then said the Emperors unto the Emperor,

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habe ye, My Lord, this Example well consider
stood and he said right well, then said he, the
Tower with Images is your Body with five
wits: as long as you live there is none so hard
by to trouble, or to make War upon you, nor
upon your people, that hath your Son right
well understood, and doth with the seven Masters
and their false Narrations or Fables seek how
they might destroy you; for you are overmuch
covetous to encline to them, insomuch that they
shall undermine you and cast you under foot, and
bring you to nought; the Images are your five
wits that be all lost. And for as much as you be
folish they shall destroy you, and your Son shall
obtain your Empire.

The Emperoz said, ye have recited a good
Example; wherefore it shall not happen to me
as to the Tower, but my Son first this day
shall taste the bitterness of death. To whom
the Empress said: if ye do so, ye shall speed well
and live long. Upon the same day he command-
ed his Son to be led to hanging; and as he was
led towards the Gallows, came riding against
him upon a Horse, the fift Master towards
the Palace, who came before the Emperoz,
and saluted him with all reverence; but he de-
spised his salutation, and put him in fear of his
life. The Master said unto the Emperoz: My
Lord, I have not deserved for to die; and to
despise my salutation, it is not for your Ho-
nour:

hour: for your Son hath not with us beene of such condition, as ye repute him, as ye in short time shall finde; and that he speaketh not, is of his great wisdom: and know ye, that he shall well speak as his time cometh, though he now speaketh not, as you in short time shall hear. But that he would have ashamed your wife, believe not, for so wise a man as he is, would never attempt so shameful a deed: and if you put him to death for your wifes words, ye shall not escape without shame and vengeance, like as Ippocras escaped not without vengeance for the death of Gallienus his Cousin. The Emperour said, that would I fain hear and understand. Then said the Master, what would it avail me to tell you this Narration for your profit, if in the mean season your Son should die: wherefore if you will call again your Son, it shall be discovered at your pleasure, after do as you think best. The Emperour had call again his Son, and set him in prison, and then began the Master to tell on the manner as followeth.

The Example of the fift Master.

Sometimes there was a Famous Physician named Ippocras right cunning, who excelled all others in Learning and Science: He had with him his Nephew Gallienus, the which he loved so much: This Gallienus

The Seven Wicke

nus was of excellent wit, and applied all his
mind and wit to learn of his Uncle the Science
of Physick. When Ippocras perceived that, in
so much as he could, he hid from him his run-
ning, fearing he should excel him in that know-
ledge, for the great wit he was off.



As Gallienus saw this, he studied and exercised,
in so much that in short time he had perfect run-
ning in Physick, for the which Ippocras enby-
ed him much. It happened upon a time there-
after, that the King of Hungary sent his Mes-
senger unto Ippocras, that he should come un-
to him for to cure his Son. Ippocras excused
himself, and sent his Cousin Gallienus with
Letters of excuse for his not coming. When
Gallienus was come before the King, he was

most shewpfull received, and the marvellous Appre-
cias would not come. The excused him, saying
that he had many great things to do, and he
might not come, but hath sent me in his stead;
and with the help of God I shall make inbore
the Child: That pleased very well the King,
Gallienus went to the Child, and when he had
seen the Merrie, and touched his Pulles, he said
to the Queen: Excellent Princess, I pray
you hear and suffer my words, and tell me who
is the Father of the Child, she said, who shalld
be the Father, but my Lord the King; Gallienus
said, I am sure he is not the Father: She an-
swered, if you will say that for a truth, I shall
cause your head to be smote off: he answered,
I say once again, that this King is not the Father,
and I am not come hither to lose my head, for
I have not deserved any such reward, and was
going his way. The Queen spake, O good Ma-
ster Galliepus, if ye will keep it secret, and not
discover me, I shall open unto you my heart.
The Master said: God defend that from me,
that I to any person shall shew it: and there-
fore O noble Queen, shew it boldly to me, for
it shall never pass my mouth, and I shall make
your Son whole; she said, if you do that, ye shall
have a good reward; hear therefore what I
shall say: By fortune came hither unto my
Lord the King of Burgundy, and he was so long
can-

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conversant with me, that this Child by him
heal. Then said the Master, fear not, I know
was so before. And anon he gave the Child me-
dicines, and compounded things, wherof to eat
and drink, and the Child was eased of his infi-
mity. And when the King heard that the Child
was recovered of his sickness, he gave unto the
Master a good reward: but of the Queen he re-
tirely received a great gift, and special thanks,
and so went his way. And when he was come
home, Ippocras his Master demanded of him
saying, have ye beheld the Child? and he said,
yea; then asked he him what he gave him? ei-
ther compounds or uncompounded things? then
said Ippocras, that Doctor of the Child is not
true to her Husband; that is truth saith Gallie-
nus. Then Ippocras was moved with envy, and
thought in himself, if there be not found a Me-
dyc, my Scienicies shall be no more set by, but
he shall be praised above me. And from that day
forward he devised how he might slay him. And
on a day Ippocras called him, and said: come go
with me to seek and gather Herbs in the Gar-
den, to whom he said: Master, I am ready.
And when they were come into the Garden
Ippocras said, I see that this Herb is right ver-
tnous: stoop down, and gather me of it. And
Gallienus did so. And as they went about the
Garden, said Ippocras, Now I will perceive

the

MAN'S T E R R E

he dodes of this Herb, that is more precious
han Gold; and therefore stoop down to the
ground and draw it out with the root, for it
is much worse. Gallienus bowed down himself
to pull out the Herb, and Ippocras drew out his
knife and killed him: After that Ippocras fell
sick to the death, that the strength of his Body
failed him, and did as much as he could to help
himself, but that could not be; and as the
Scholars and Disciples heard of it, they went
hastily unto him, and did all they might or could
for profit of his health, but it availed them no
thing.

When Ippocras this perceived, he said unto
his Scholars: fetch me a great Tun, and fill
it full to the brim with Water; and when they
had so done, he said unto them: Shake up
therein an hundred holes; and when that was
also done, there went none of the Water out.
Then said Ippocras: Behold, my most dear
Disciples how the vengeance of God is fallen
upon me, as you may openly see: For in this
Tun are an hundred holes, and goeth not
thereout any drop: Right so there cometh no
verue out of the Herbs to help me, and there-
fore what ye do unto me, helpeth not; for I
must die: but my dear Children, if my Ne-
phew Gallienus were alive he could heal me,
whom I have slain, and that grievech me soze,
and therefore the vengeance of God cometh
upon

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upon me : and this said, he turned to the wall, and gave up the ghost. Then said the Master unto the Emperoz, My Lord, Understand ye well what I have said : he answered, ye right well : what hurt had it been to him if Gallicenus had lived.

The Master answered : it had been better for Ippocras at that time had not he died, and therefore by the right wise judgment of God, his Medicines availeth him not, and therefore I shewed to you that it shall happen mooste to you if that you put to death your Son for the words of your Wife, who in time of necessity shall ease and succour you. And consider you not, that ye have after the first wife, wedded this wife that ye now have : And so you may the third and fourth, and never shall ye have such a Son, that shall save you from peril. The Emperoz said, truly he shall not die.

Then said the Master, then do you that he cometh the wisdom of your years, and the shrewdnes of your Person, and I commend you to God, and I thank you that ye have this day for me spared your Son. The Emperoz said, I mark this well, that women are very crafty, therefore I will not for you, but for my self spare him.

The

The sixth Complaint of the Empress.

When the Empress had knowledge thereof, she made her self so impatient, that all that saw her, or heard her, wondered, and said to the Emperor: your wife pineth as though she would shortly dye. The Emperor hearing thereof went to her, and said, wherefore (good Lady) be you so impatient? She answered, saying, O Lord, how should I hold it in, when I am the only Daughter of a King and your wife, and in your company I have had great despite, and you have promised to punish him, but perform it not? the Emperor said, I wot not what to do, ye labour to have my Son put to death, and the Masters labour to save his life; and amongst these I know he is my Son: but where the truth is, that I know not. Then said she, this is the cause whereof I complain, that ye believe the Masters more than me; and therefore it shall happen to you, as it did to a King and his Steward.

Then said the Emperor, tell me that Example, peradventure it may move me sooner to put my Son to death; she said gladly, but I pray give attention to what I say: and began as followeth.



The sixth Example of the Empress.

Here was a King most proud and deformed in his visage, so that all women hated him. The King thought to destroy all Rome, and carry away the Bodies of Peter and Paul: who while he was in the mind, called his Steward that was secretly with him of his Privy Council, and said unto him, go seek a fair woman that this night may sleep with me. The Steward answered: My Lord, ye know your infirmitie, and no woman would do evil without a great sum of mony. The King said, think you for my mony I will want one take I not Gold and Silver enough: though it were a thousand Florents I would it give.

The

M A Y T E S B I S.

The Steward hearing that his master was a covetous man, and went to his wife, which was fair, chaste, and of good kindred, and said to her, O my good wife, my lord the Sheriff with a covetous woman and with me, so I hear, it though she alreade had a thousand florins and hath commanded me to provide him more; wherefore I counsel you, that you may get that money. The wife said, wherefore so, that the Sheriff were not so proud and fatil: of Whiche yet, would I not consent for the sake of God. The Steward said, I command you, and promise you, that without your consent here in ye shall never have a good day with me: she hearing that, trembled, insomuch that for fear she consented unto him.

The Steward then went to the King, and said, Sir, I have found a fair Woman, and she is come of a very good House, which will not have less than a thousand florins; in the Evening she shall come, and early in the morning must go away, that she be not seen. The King answered, I am contented. When night was come, the Steward led his wife to the Kings Bed, made fast the door, and went his way. Early in the morning the Steward arose and went unto the King, and said, my Lord, it will be day within a while, it is good you keep your promise, and let the Woman go. The King said, This Woman pleaseth me

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so well, that so soon she should not depart. When he heard that, he departed all sorry, and tarried a while, and came to the King again, and said: My Lord, the morning is come, therefore let the woman go, and as I promised her, lest she be ashamed. The King said, yet shall she not go; therefore go out, and shut the door. The Steward right sorrowful departed, and went up and down with an heavy heart, till the clear day appeared: then he entered again into the Chamber, and said, my Lord, it is clear day, suffer the woman to depart, that she be not ashamed. The King answered, I say she shall not yet depart, for her company is to me well pleasing. The Steward hearing that, could no longer forbear to hold his own counsel, but said, O my good Lord, I beseech you suffer her to depart, for it is mine own wife. The King hearing that, said to him, open the window, and when it was open the bright day appeared, and he beheld the woman fair, and perceived it was the wife of the Steward, and said, O thou stain of Manhood, and shame of the Creation, why hast thou for so little pity shamed thy good wife, and delivered her to me unwitting? Therefore hast thee, and get thee out of my Realm, and never come in my sight; for if ever I see thee, thou shalt die the most shameful death that can be imagined. When the Steward heard that,

that, he fled, and durst not abide; and when he was come into the Realm, and the King kept that wife all his life-time in great honour, and gave her plenty of all things that she had, and pertained.

After that the King caused to be assembled an mighty Army of quiete Men of Warre, and went to the City of Rome with great might, and besieged it on all sides, until the Romans would have delivered to him (for to have withdrawn himself from thence) the Bodies of the Holy Apostles, St. Peter and Paul.

Then there was in the City seven wise Masters, as ye have now by the counsel of whom all the City was governed. And the Citizens came unto them, and said, What shall we do? It behoves us that we give unto our Enemies the Bodies of the Holy Apostles, to the City. Then answered the first Master, I shall with my wisdom this day save the City, and the Bodies of the Apostles. And comeng one of them promised for one day to do the like, in like manner as your Masters have promised your safety. With that the King began to assault the City in all parts. Then began the first Master to alleadge so wisely to have Peace that the King that day left his assault, and withdrew a little from the City. And so did all the Masters one after another, till the last. Unto whom came the Burgesses of

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the City; and said, O Master, ye shall understand, that the King hath sworn, that to morrow with all his strength he will win the City; and we must all be his jeopardy to lose our lives: Therefore acquitting your private, defend us from danger, like as your fellows before you have done. When answered the Master, For I feare not, to morrow, I shall by my coming there such an opposition, that the King and all his knighthood shall leave the Siege. The next day the King gave a great assault to the City; then went the Master and cloathed himself in a marvellous strange vesture, having therin the feathers of Peacocks, and other fowls of divers Colours, and took two bright Swords in each hand, and went there with an hood upon the heigh of the Tower of the City, and began to move and turn, and was himself towards the Host, so that they might all behold him; and he had in his hand the bright Swords that marvellously shined; they with the Kings, How be holding of ha, said unto him, O King, behold on the top of yonder Tower a wonderful thing, ye (quoth he) see it right well, it is marvellous, but what is, I know not. They said, it is the God of Christian Folk, that is come out of Heaven to say us with two Swords if we longe abide. The King hearing that, trembled for fear, and said, what shall we do? There is but one way

way, and that is, that we part from hence, least their God revenge himself upon us. Then began the King with his Host to say: Notwithstanding there was no need, for they of the Master was deceived, when the Romans saw that, they hastily pursued them, well arm'd, and slew the King with many of the people, and in that manner (by great subtlety of the Masters) was the mighty King with his Army subdued. Then said the Empress unto the Emperor, Lord have you understood what I have said? He said, yea, with good attention. She said, now ye have heard what I said unto you at the beginning of this Narration of the Steward, that the King trusted so much, which for covetousness shamed his own wife, and for that was banished out of the Land in like manner, your Son, for the desire he hath to the Empire, intendeth to destroy you: Where whilst he is in your power, do with him as the King did with his Steward. If you will not put him to death, then put him out of your Empire, that you may live in safeguard of your life. And have you also heard how the King lay before Rome, and how he was by the false Masters deceived, and he with his followers were slain? In like manner the Seven wise Masters intended to deal with you, and with crafty wiles deceive you, and in the intent to murther you, that so your Son might

THE Seven WIFE

reign in our Empire. Whereupon answered the Empero^r, that shall not be, for to morrow my Son shall die. Then he commanded his Servants forthwith to lead his Son to Execution. When the people heard these things, they gathered in great Troops, much lamenting the death of the Empero^rs Son. And as soon as the sixth Master had heard thereof, he hasted to the Empero^rs Court, and saluted him with reverence, but he disdainfully threatened him that he should be put to death with his Son, for he was with them made dumb and a Kibauld, which was shewed towards his Wife. The Master replied, I have not deserved to die with your Son, but to have large gifts, for he is not dumb, as you shall hear within thre^e days, if he may live so long; but if you put him to death for the words of your Wife, then I shall marvel at your wisdom, and without doubt it shall happen to you, as sometimes it happened to a Knight, that so much allowed the saying of his wife, that he was bound to an Horse-tail, and drawn through the City to the Gallows. The Empero^r said, for the love of God shew me that Example, that I may beware of that evil. That I will not do, said the Master, without you call again your Son. Then he commanded to call back his Son: and the Master began as followeth.

THE SEVEN WIFE

MASTERIS.

The Example of the Sixth Master.

Some tyme there was an Emperour of Rome which had three knyghts, whom he loved above all others: in the same City there was an ancient knyght that had wedded a faire young wife whiche above all thynge he loved, as you do the Empress: the Lady could sing with such sweetnes, that many desired the company. It befel on a season as she sate in the House, her visage turned to the Street that she migh be seyn them that walked by, and began sweetly to sing, that all folkes delighted to heare her. By chance came that way a knyght of the Emperours Court that heare her voice, and beholding her with a willing mind, and attentive ear, he was exceedingly taken in love: And entring the house, fell into talk with her greatly, but chieflly of love, and amongst other talk he demanded of her, what he shold give her to sleep by her side one night: She answered, one hundred Florenys. Then said the knyght, tell me when I shall come, and I shall give it you. So quoth she, when I have convenient time, I shal send for you. The next day she sang in the same place, and the second knyght of the Emperours Court, came by that way, who likewise was smitten in her love, and he also promised her an hundred Florenys, to whom she made the like promise. The third day came to her another knyght, and unto him she likewise consented,

and

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and he promised her an hundred Florents, if she should give him knowledge of the time at which she also promised. These three Knights, having so secretly spoken with the Lady, that not one of them had knowledge of one another's coming unto her. Now the Lady was deceitful, and came to her Husband, and said: Sir, I have a secret matter to shew you, wherein if you follow my counsel, our poverty you may largely relieve. The Knight replied, tell it me, and I will keep it as secret as my life, and fulfil it to the uttermost of my Power. She answered, three Knights of the Emperors Court have been with me one after another, in such wise, that none of them knoweth of another's counsel; and each Knight offered me an hundred Florents. Right we an hundred Florents I get, and no man know it, should not our poverty be well relieved? Then said the Knight, I pray thee, tell me whatsoever you will counsel me; I shall willingly perform; then said she, I will give you counsel, that when the Knights shall come with their Florents, you shall stand behind the Gate with your sword drawn, and as they come (being they come one after another) you shall say them, and so we shall have it be three hundred Florents they bring, without any mans knowledge. The Knight answered, O my best beloved wife, I fear this evil cannot be hid, and we shall therefore suffer death if it were known: She

the kindest man; & I doffed this night begayn, and
 therfore make wgyo ent, feare not. When the
 knyght saw the woso hardy, it caused him to
 he rable boles when he saw for the first knyght,
 and he came wthoute tarryng to the place, and
 knocked; and he asked if he had brought the
 hundred grozants. he answered I have brought
 them. Then he let him in, and he had no swete
 entred but her husband mychete him. Immediately
 came the second knyght, and in like
 manner was slain. And not long after came the
 thid knyght, whom also he slew. Having fin-
 ished the butchery, they conveyed the mychete
 by boord in a lette Chamber. When they
 haue this done, the knyght said unto the Lady,
 O deare wif, if these deare boles shold be
 found wth me, we shall die the most painefull
 deaþ that can be imagined; for it is not possy-
 ble but soone after this knyght will be milled in
 the Emprys Courte, and great search will be
 made for them throught the Cite. She an-
 swered and sayd, Sir knyght, I have now this
 knyght began, and will make a godes end, fear
 iþ me; I will say. This Lady had a brother
 whiche had the Governmente of the wealth of
 the Cite, whiche knyghts watched the streets
 wth his felawes: he sted at the place, and
 called unto her brother, and said O my well
 beloued brother, I haue a secret matter, whiche
 I haue

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I would not make it known, therefore come I with me, and I will relate it unto you. And when he was entered the House, the Lady received him friendly, and gave him wine, and said, my beloved Brother, this is the cause I have called you, for I have much need of your good counsel. The Brother answered, speak boldly, and whatsoever I may do, to my power, shall be at your desire, without any letting. Then said she, yesterday came a Knight in friendship, but afterwards he fell into such variance with my Husband, that he slew him: and he lyeth here dead in my Chamber: now my dear Brother, we have no man that we may trust, but only you: And if this dead Body be found in our House, we shall be put to death. Now she mentioned but one. Her Brother said, deliver him me in a sack, and I will bear him to the sea, she hearing that, was glad thereof, and delivered him the Body of the first Knight, he took it, and went a good space, and cast him therein: and as soon as this was done, he came to his Sister, and said to her, Give me of the best wine, for you are of him sure: and she gave him thanks, and went to her Chamber, as though she had gone for wine, and began to cry aloud: The Knight that was cast into the Sea is come again. As her Brother heard that, he marelled sore, and said, Give me him

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him, I shall see if he will rise again, and took the second Knight (supposing it had been the Body of the first) and went to the Sea, and with a stone drowned him. That done, he went again to his Sister, and said: now fill me a Cup of good Wine, for I have drowned him so deep, that he shall never come again. Then said she, thanks be to God; and went again to her Chamber and feigned to fetch Wine, and cried aloud, Alas he is risen again, and is come out of the Sea! And as her Brother heard that, with a great marvel, he said, what Devil is this that I have cast into the Water, and yet he is come again, deliver him me the third time, and I shall see if he will come again. Then she gave him the third Knight, which he believed had been the first, and went without the City to a great Forest, and made a great fire to cast him therein, and when he was almost burnt, the Brother went a little distance to do his need. Then came a Knight that was to ride to the City, where in the Morning should be a Turney and Jousting: it was cold weather, and dark, and not far from the City, and when he saw the fire, he drew thereto, and alighted and warmed him.

The Watchman came and said, what art thou? the Knight said, I am a Knight. Then said the Watchman thou art no Knight, but a Devil, for I first cast thee into the Water,

then

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then with a great stone I drowned the, and the
third time I put the into this fire, supposing
thou hadst been burne; and yet thou standest
here: And then he took the Knight with his
Horse, and cast them both into the fire. After
that he went unto his Sister, and told what
had happened; and said, now bring me the best
Wine; for after I had burnt him, I found him
again by the fire with a Horse, and have cast
them both into the fire: and by this his Sister
perceived he had burnt a Knight of the Tour-
ney: who anon brought him the Wine abun-
dantly; and after he had well drunk, he de-
parted thence. Not long after there fell a great
contention betwixt the Knight and his Wife,
so that he smote her; and she had indignation
thereof, being angry, and said, that many head
her: O wretch wilt thou kill me, as thou didst
the three Knights? certain men hearing that,
laid hands on them, and brought them to the
Emperoz; and the woman confessed that her
Husband had slain the three Knights of the
Emperozs, and how he took from them three
hundred Florents. And it being so found, both
were drawn at a Horse-tail and hanged. Then
said the Master to the Emperoz, have you un-
derstood what I have said? he answered, right
well: I say for certain that Wifre was the
worst woman that might be; for first she mo-
ved him to murther, and afterwards discovered
him

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him. The Master said: without doubt it shall happen to you worse, if you put your Son to death by advice of your wife. The Emperoz said, my Son shall not die this day. The Master hearing that, gave thanks to the Emperoz, and took leave, and went his way.

The seventh Complaint of the Empress.

W^HEN the Empress heard the Emperoz Son was yet living, as a mad woman, she ran to the Emperoz weeping, and saying, Oh unhappy woman! what shall I do? I must needs slay my self that am ashamed, and no punishment thereupon done. The Emperoz answered: God defend that you should have mind on such a wicked deed; suffer a while, and you shall have a good end. She answered, Sir, the end shall be evil; for of that shall follow us great confusion. The Emperoz said, leave off such talk. She said, Lord, it shall come to you and to your Son, as to a King and his Steward. I pray tell that Example. She said, I will gladly, but I fear you will hear me no more: For next day the seventh Master shall speak, and save your Son from death as the other six have done, and when your Son shall speak, of whose words you shall have such joy and delectation, that the love betwixt us shall be wholly forgotten. The Emperoz said, that is impossible; for I shall never forget your love.

Athen

Thei Seuen Wife

Then said the my best beloved Lord, if it please you, I will tell you one Example by which you shall beware of many perils, especially of your accursed Son, who intendeth to destroy me by his Masters. The Emperoz said, tell on. And the Empress began to tell as hereafter followeth.



The seventh Example of the Empress.

Here was a King which loved his Wife above all things, insomuch that he closed her within a strong Castle, and bare the keys thereof himself: the Lady was therefore heavy and comfortless. Now in far Countries there was a valiant Knight, which lying on his Bed dreamed he saw one of the fairest Queens that

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ever eye beheld, whose love above all others he desired to obtain, and if he might see her walk, he should certainly have some knowledge of her, by whom to him great friendship and Honour should come. To the Queen the same night by vision of the same Knight, the like was also shewed, and as yet they had no knowledge of each other, neither of Name or Fame. When the Knight had thus dreamed, and seen (as he thought) a most vertuous and comely Lady, he determined that his foot should take no rest till he had found out the Lady, that in his dream seemed so glorious: And having took Horse, and all that was necessary for his journey, he travelled throughout divers Regions, Countries, and Kingdoms, till at last he came into the Land, where this Queen was by her jealous Husband kept in a strong Castle. When this Knight was come unto the City, and had for a season therein sojourned, it fell out, that as the Knight walked by the Castle, (and knew not as then, that the Queen was therein kept) she was at that time sitting in a Window to see the people pass by, and amongst others she espied the Knight, and knew him to be the man of whom she had dreamed before: The Knight by chance lifted up his eyes, and perceived the Lady in a Window, and his mind gave him that it was she of whom he had dreamed, and she began a Song in Love: As he heard that

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he was taken with her love. That Knight from thenceforth daily walked about the Castle beholding it all over, to espy if any way he might get in, to declare his mind unto her. The Lady perceiving that, presently indited a Letter, and secretly conveyed it unto him from the Casement of her Chamber Window, which when he had perused, and understanding the will of the Lady, he began to haunt Jests and Tournaments, and did perform so many marvellous Acts, that the fame of him came to the ears of the King, and as soon as the King heard thereof, he sent after him, and said unto him: Sir Knight, I have heard that you have got much honour at our Jests and Tournaments; wherefore if it please you to abide here and dwell with us, we shall give you large rewards. The Knight answered: O mighty Prince, I am your Servant; would I could do any service that would please your Magnis-
tance, without taking any reward, save one thing before all other I desire. The King said: shew unto me boldly what that is. The Knight answered: My Lord, seeing that it hath pleased your most Excellent Majestie to take me for your Servant, and one of your grabe Counsel, it seemeth to me most expedient for both our delights, that I have a place near the Wall of the Castle, that I at all times might be more ready at your call, when you need. The King

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answered, I consent; make it as you think best. Then the Knight caused many Workmen to be brought, and having so done, he chose out certain for his purpose, and caused them to build him a fair Lodging near the Walls of the Tower: this being finished, he made a Covenant with one of the Workmen, (whom he thought fitteit) to make a secret way to the Queen's Lodgings: and when this was finished, he killed the Workman, because he should not make it known. Having thus done, he went in unto the Queen, and did her reverence as became him, and they discoursed of many matters. Having thus passed the day, the night drawing on, he desired he might sleep by her one night, but she often denied him; yet nevertheless consented unto his request. Now they having spent the night in pleasure, and morning being come, the Knight returned to his Lodgings: and the Queen began to think with her self: what shall I do, if I should make my Husband acquainted herewith: two evils would come thereof; the one is my shame, and peradventure, he would utterly forsake me, and cause me to be driven out of the Land for ever: The other is, that he would slay the Knight, for death it is not possible for him to escape; therefore I think it more expedient to be secret therein then to reveal it. After that, the Knight as often as it pleased him, went in

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unto the Queen, and did his will with her ; and she gave him a King, which the King had given her at her Wedding. This Knight was so famous in Fusing, that in every Battle and Tournament he had the Victory : For which cause he was in great favour with the King, so that he made him Steward and Gouvernour over all his Land.

It happened on a day, that the King disposed to ride a hunting, and commanded his Steward to be ready on the morrow to go with him : whereupon he offered himself willingly. On the morrow they entred the Forest, all day chassing the wild Beasts, and were so weary that the King sate down by a Fountain to rest, and the Knight by his side : The Knight was no sooner set, but he fell asleep by the King, haging the King on his finger, which the Queen had given him, which the King perceiving, knew it well. When the Knight awaked, and perceiving the King had seen the King, he fained himself to be soze sick, and said, my honoured Lord, I feel my self so sick, that if I do not haste me unto my Lodging, and seek eut some present remedy, either by Physick, or some other course, I am but a dead man, therefore I pray you give me leave to go home. To whom the King made this answer : Go, dear Friend in the Name of God, and see there be nothing wanting to procure thy health, that my Court or King

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Kingdom can afford. The King had no sooner ended his Speech, but immediately the Knight took leave, and getting upon his Horse, he hasted to his House, and as soon as he was come home he alighted, and hasted to the Queen's Lodgings, and gave her the King again, and told her withall how the King had espied it upon his finger, when they were both set down to rest: withal he told her, that he feigned himself to be very sick, for which cause the King gave him leave to return to his Lodgings: He also prayed her, that if the King at any time should call for the King, she should shew it unto him. This done, he took his leave of her, and went again unto his Lodging. Not long after, the King came to the Queen, and she received him right lovingly; and after a little time had passed, the King said unto her, my Renowned Lady, shew me the King that I gave you, for I have a great desire to see it. She answered: O my best beloved Lord, why at this time do you desire to see it? then said he, if you shew it not to me incontinently, it shall repent you. Then she arose and went to her Cabinet, and took the King out of it: and having thus done, she brought it to her Husband: and when he had seen it, he was half ashamed, and said; my best beloved Queen: O how like is that Knight's King unto this, which I saw upon his finger: for I believe it had been mine, and that neare.

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the cause I did ask so hasty for it. And of this suspicion I yield my self guilty, my dear Lady, in this behalf: The strength of the Tower de-
ceived me, for I thought none could get there-
in but I my self alone, in regard none had the
keeping of the keys but my self. She said unto
him, my dear Lord, wonder not, for one King
may be like another, and Workmen seldom
make one piece of work, but others make the
same: But God forgive you in that you have
suspected me; for you know the strength of the
Tower, and the keys you have always in
your presence, and trust no man therewith.
After that the Knight ordained a great Din-
ner and said unto the King: My Sovereign,
my Lady and Love is come from out of my
Country to seek me, for whose sake I have or-
dained a Dinner, and would entreat your
Highness to do me the honour, as to dine with
me this day, and take such meat as shall be
provided. The King answered, most willing-
ly will I do you that worship, and more. The
Knight was glad thereof, and by his secret
way went unto the Queen and said unto her:
My beloved Lady, you must do thus: come to
my House the privy way, and cloath your self
richly, and deck your self with Jewels, and o-
ther Ornaments, according to the Custom of
my Country; then shall you sit at Table with
my King, as my Sovereign Lady, and make

good

good cheer: She replied, Sir Knight, I am ready to do according to your desire. When the time appointed was near, and the King coming from the Castle towards the Knights House, in the mean time by the secret way the Queen entred the Knights Lodgings: (before the King could come) and apparelled her self after the manner of the Knights Countrey. When the King entred the House, she with Courtly salutations received him; and when the King had beheld her, he demanded of the Knight what woman she should be that seemed so fair? Then answered the Knight: My renowned Lord, it is my Sovereign Lady, that for the love she beareth me, is come out of my Country after me, to know why I should absent myself so long from her love and service. The Speeches being ended, the Knight caused the King to sit down at the Table, and made the Queen sit by him: The King thought it was his Queen, and said within himself; O how like is this woman unto my Wife? So the strength of the Tower still deceived him, that he gave more credit unto the Knights words, than to his own eyes. The Queen began to talk to the King, and so to stir him to eat and drink, and make good cheer: and as the King heard the voice, he said unto himself: O blessed Lord, how like is this Woman to my Queen in her behaviour, speech, visage, and in all other

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other conditions ! and still the strength of the Tower deceived him. In the end of the Feast the Knight prayed his beloved Lady to sing before the King ; and she began to sing a Song of Love. When the King heard her, he knew her voice, and thought unto himself, is not this my Wife ? and yet how can this be, I having the keys of the Tower my self in keeping ? so all Dinner time the King late debating thus within himself. Dinner ended he willed the Knight forthwith to take up the Table, he having urgent occasions that moved him thereunto, for he was sore troubled in mind. Whereupon the Knight said : My Lord, what is the reason you are so melancholy ? What is that discontenteth you ? be not troubled, if it please you, we shall make you some pleasant sport. And the Gentlewoman said : my beloved Lord, if it please you with us to abide, we shall make you all the delight that this place can afford ; if your Queen her self was here, she could not give you more content. Whereupon the King began to be angry, and said : Take away the Table, for I may no longer abide here, until that I have resolved my mind. Thereupon the Knight straightway obeyed the King, and took up the Table, giving thanks to all, but especially to the King his Sovereign Lord and Master.

Now the King departed, and went with all haste

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hasten unto the Castle, to see whether that this Queen were therein or not: But in the meantime she went in at the Privy doore, and stripped off her uppermost vesture, and put her self into the same habit the King left her attired with. When the King entred therein, he found the Queen in the same Cloathing he had left her in before: and seeing all fell out contrary to his expectation, he kindly embraced her, and lovingly kissed her, and said unto her: This day have I eaten with my Knight, and with his loving Lady, who came out of her Country unto my Court to find him out; who being met and overjoyed in the sight of her, did presently ordain a great Feast, and humbly entreated me to do him so much Grace, as to accompany him at his Feast. Whereupon I answered him: that for the love I did bear him, I would do him that honour, and much more, if requested; whom I having beheld, she seemed to me so fair, that since I was born mine eyes have not seen one so like as she is to you, insomuch that all Dinner time I was troubled with many matters, and could hardly endure unto the end of the Feast, but that I must come to see whether you were here or there.

Then the Queen answered him: O mighty King, wherefore do you mistrust me, having often found the contrary? Do you not know that

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that this Tower is so fast, strong, and invincible, that no man can enter in or out, without your knowledge? For you alwayes keep the keys, and will not trusst any therewith; how then is it possible I should be there? you may find one man like another: you remember of late how you did mistake the Knights Kings? And have you more Arguments of suspition against me? was it not sufficient to debar me of liberty these many years, but you must needs be jealous besides? I tell you, O noble King, if you do not forsake your jealousie, and release me out of imprisonment before three dayes be expired, I will end my dayes herein; for I had rather live a Servant at liberty, than a Queen in prison. The King answered: all that you have objected is true, of which I acknowledge my self guilty; wherefore have patience for a few dayes, and as sure as I reign King of this Country, I will set you at liberty, and so he lovingly embraced her with a kiss, and returned to his own Lodgings. Now he had not rested above two days, but the Knight came and said unto the King: O my honourable Lord, I have long served your Highness; now it is time I return into my own Country; and for all the service that I have done unto you, I desire but this one thing before my de parture, which is: To give to me before the Priest, with your own hand, in

the

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the Church, my beloved Lady, whom I intend to wed, who followed me out of far Countries for love, and whom I shall bring thither again) as my lawful and true Wife, which will be to my great honour when I come into my Country. The King answered: that petition and more than that (if you will desire it) will I gladly fulfil. Then the King prefixed the day of Marriage; when the good King came to Church honourably attended, the Priest was ready (adorned with his Vestments) to solemnize the Matrimony. The Knight apparelled the Queen in his own House after the manner of his own Country, and ordained two Knights to lead her to the Church, who believed it had been his Paramour. When they were come to the Church, the Priest said: who shall give this Woman to this Knight? The King said, I shall give her unto her own Knight; and took her by the hand, and said, O good Woman, you are so like my Queen, that my love is to you the greater, and also because you shall be wedded to this Knight whom I affect above all men, and he shall be of my House, and so put the Queens hand into the Knights; and the Priest after the Order of the Church, bound them, and wedded them together in true and faithful wedlock. When all these Rites were finished, the Knight said unto the King: O most noble Lord, the Ship that I intend to go in towards

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my Country, is now furnished for my journey, and ready to sail away ; wherefore I humbly beseech your Noble Grace to accompany my beloved wife thereunto, and that you would admonish her to love me, and have me in favour above all others living, and so much the rather for your good counsel. The King with his followers (besides others) did accompany them unto the Ship, for whose departure many were exceeding sorrowful and heavy. Then the King began to say unto the Queen : My dear friend, hearken well unto my Counsel, and see that ye follow it, for it shall be to your profit : my most honoured and beloved Knight hath now wedded and done to you all the honour that in him is ; wherefore, look that you love, honour, and obey him above all other men, as God hath commanded, and that you be unto him true in all your dealings. As soon as this Speech was ended, he delivered her unto the Knight, saying : My blessing with you both, and our Lord keep and conduct you safely unto your own Country. Then the Knight and the Queen bowed their head to the King, and gave him thanks for all the kindnesses that he had done them, and having so done, they committed him to the Almighty, and entered into the Ship ; the Mariners hoisted sail before the Wind, and within a short space the King lost sight of the Ship, and thence going hastily

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hastily into the Castle, he went to seek for his Queen; and when he could not find her, he was moved over all the parts of his body, and sought about all the Tower, so long till at last he found out the hole that the Knight had caused to be made; and when he saw that he wept bitterly; crying out: Alas, alas, This Knight in whom I had so great confidence, hath robbed me of my wife! was not I a Fool, that gave more faith unto the words of a Knight, than to mine own eyes?

Then said the Empress: my Lord, have you understood what I have said? The Emperoz said, as well as may be. Then answered the Empress: Remember how he trusted the Knight, and yet the Knight deceived him: in like manner do you trust the Seven Unwise Masters, who labour to destroy me your wife; and you give more credit to their words than to your own eyes: for you have seen how your ungracious Son hath rent and scratch'd me, whereof yet I bear tokens and marks about me, as you may see; also you know well how your accursed Son hath shamed me, and you mark not how they defend him in this his folly. Therefore it is to be feared, that it will happen to you worse than to the King of whom I have spoken unto you.

The Emperoz replied: I will believe mine own Eyes before I will give credence to their

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their words, and therefore to morrow I shall do justice upon my Son. The next day the Emperoz commanded his Son to be brought before him: which being done, he commanded him to be led to the place of Execution, there to suffer death according to the Law. Then there began to arise great noise and bewailing amongst the common people for the death of the Emperozs onely Son. At last when the seventh Master heard it, he ran immediately unto the Officers which were leading him to the Gallows, and said: My Friends, I pray you not to make overmuch haste, but stay your hands a while, for I think this day, (with the help of the Almighty God) to save him from all perils: and from thence the Master hasted him to the Emperozs Palace, and did him reverence according to his accustomed duty: But the Emperoz with great indignation made him this answer: never more have you any joy in this world, for that you have sent my Son home untaught and dumb, whom I delivered unto you well speaking; for which cause you shall all be put to death with him. The Master answered: O most Noble Emperoz, the time is not long betwixt this and to morrow noon; then (by the grace of God) you shall hear him speak discreetly, and shall declare the truth of all things, and this I promise you he will perform to the full upon pain of my life, if you

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will spare him so long time : if you find it no^t so, then take my life, and the lives of us all. Then said the Emperoz, if I might but hear my Son speak, it would give me sufficient content, and I would not desire longer to live. Then answered the Master : all this and more you shall hear and see, and confess it to be true, if you will but abide this little time, and then the strife that hath been betwixt us and the Emperoz will clearly be decided. And if you suffer him to be put to death through the words of your most ungodly wife, I tell you of a truch, it shall happen worse to you than it did to a Knight that died for a little blood that he saw his wife to bleed, to whom afterwards she was most unnatural : then said the Emperoz ; that Example would I fain hear. Then said the Master, let your Son be called again, and I shall tell you so notable Example, that during your life you may be ware of the unstableness of women. Then the Emperoz said, I shall ; go call my Son again, upon condition, that to morrow I shall hear him speak, as you have promised : the Master said ; do that my Lord, for it shall be so, and began to tell as followeth.

The Example of the Seventh Master.

There was a Knight that had a fair young wife, whom he loved entirely, so that he could



could not be out of her sight. It happened on a time that they played together at Chess, and the Knight by chance had a knife in his hand, and he fortuned to smite her hand on the knife, so that a little blood began to appear. When the Knight saw his wife bleed, he fell to the ground in a swound; his wife seeing that, cast cold water on his face, insomuch that he came a little to himself, and said lightly, call the Curate with the Holy Sacrament, for I must die; for the blood that I have seen come from your finger hath smitten death to my heart; Then the Priest came, and comforted him much, and administered the Sacrament unto him, and anon he died: for whose death there was great sorrow, especially by his wife; also after the obser-

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obsequies were finished, she went and lay upon the Grave, and there made great lamentation, and said, she would never depart thence, but as a Turtle-dove the would for the love of her Husband there abide, and die. Then went her Friends and Neighbours unto her, and said, what availeth this for his Soul, to live here weeping until you die? It is better that you go home, and there give Alms for the love of God, and that shall more avail your Soul, than in this place to abide. To whom she answered: I pray you hold your peace, you are evil counsellors; consider ye not, how I am from him separated by death, for a little blood he saw come out of my finger: therefore I shall never from hence depart.

Her Friends hearing that, made her a little House nigh the Grave, and putting therein all things necessary, went their ways, thinking within a while she shoulde be weary to be alone, and to desolate from all company, and thereby desire again the company of the people.

In the City was then a Law, that if an Offender against the Law were hanged, the Sheriff all night should watch the dead body armed; and if it happened that the body hanged were stolen, the Sheriff should lose all his Lands and his life at the Kings pleasure. It happened soon after the Knight was dead, that a man shoulde be hanged for espeffing, so that the Sheriff all

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that nighte watched by the Gallows, not farre
from the City; and the Church-yard was not
far from the same: then began the Sheriff to be
so cold, that he could not possibly endure it, but
was even ready to die, except he might speedily
warm him, it was so grea[n]e cold, and so great
a frost; and by chance he espynng a fire on the
Church-yard, he hasted, and came thereto, and
when he was come neare to it, he knocked at the
little house. The woman said, who at this time
knocked at the house of the sorrowful woman.
He answered, I am the Sheriff that hath endur-
ed much cold, and am ready to freeze to death,
unless without delay you let me warm my selfe;
she said unto him, I feare that if I let you in
ye should cause me to be more hevy. He said
I promise you, that I shall say no words to your
displeasure. Then she let him in, and when he
had styn a while by the fire, and was well
warmed, he said unto her, O Fair womane
with your licence would I faine speak but one
word with you. She answered, Sir, say what
pleaseth you. Then he said, O Lady, you be a
fayre Gentlewoman, rich and young; were it not
more convenient for you to dwelle at home, than
to gyde Alms, then to waste your self here with
weeping? She said, Sir, this ha[ve]d I knowne
this before, you ha[ve]d not come in, for I say to
you, as I ha[ve] said to others oftentimes, you
know my Husband loved me so well, that for a

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little blood he saffome bleed out of my finger, he
is dead, wherefore I will here die for the love
of him. As the Knight heard this, he took leave
and went again unto the Gallows; and when
he was come thither, and saw that the Thief
(he left their hanging) was stoln away, he
began to wax heavy, and said: wo is me, what
shall I do? for I have lost my life, and all my
goods: and going up and down thus full of sor-
row, he knew not what way to turn himself:
at last he concluded to go to the desolate Lady,
and shew her the heaviness of his heart, to wit
if she could give him any good counsel: when
he was come thither, he called, and she asked
him the cause: And he said, Madam, I am
the Sheriff that was right now with you, and
I would fain shew you the secrets of my heart,
therefore I pray you open the doo. And he
went in, and said unto her: O most vertuous
Lady, I am now come to have your advice,
for you know the Laws of the Land are, that
when any man is hanged, and stoln off the
Gallows, the Sheriff's life and goods are in
the King's hands: Now it happened while I
was here, and warned me, the Thief was
stolen; therefore I pray fair Lady, for the love
of God, give me your best advice, what to do.
She answered: I have compassion upon you,
for by the Law you have lost your life and goods
to the King; do now after my counsel; and

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ye shall lose neither : he answered I am to you
greatly bound, hoping to have good comfort.
She said, will you then promise to make me
your wife : the Knight answered : would God
you were indeed so minded : but I fear you dis-
rain to humble your self unto so poor a Knight :
she said I give you my will there, and he gave
her again his will, and consented to be her
Knight during his life. Then said she, ye know
such a day my Lord was buried, which for the
love of me died ; take him out of the Sepulchre,
and hang him up in stead of the Thief. The
Knight answered : Lady, your counsel is very
good, then went they and opened the Sepul-
chre and drew him out. The Knight said unto
the Lady, how shall we now do : because e're
the Thief was hanged, two of his Teeth were
smitten out, and I fear me, if that were per-
ceived I shall die the death. Then the Lady
said : Take a Stone and strike out two of his
Teeth. The Knight answered, Madam, that
may not I do, for while he lived he was my
crusy Friend, and it shold be to me great re-
buke to do so disloyal a deed to his Body, being
dead. She answered, for your love I shall do
it, and presently took a Stone, and smote out
two of his Teeth, and said to the Sheriff : take
him and hang him upon the Gallows like the
Thief. The Knight said : I fear to do it, for the
Thief in taking was wounded upon his Head

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and he lacked his Ears. O, Madam, God for-
bid that I do so to the dead body, that I loved so
well in his life. Then said she, give me your
Sword, and I shall for your love do it, and so
took the Sword, and smote a manly stroak in
the dead mans forehead, and cut off his Ears,
and when she had thus done, she said, now hang
him. Then the Knight answered, yet I fear
to hang him, for the Chief wanted both his
Stones, and if he be searched, and not found
without, all my labour is lost. Then said she,
I never saw man so fearful, seeing the mat-
ter is so sure: Take a Knife, and cut off his
Stones. And he answered, that I may not
do in any wise, and therefore I pray you spare
me, for you know what a man is without his
Stones. She said: for the love of you I shall
do it, and took the Knife, and cut off her Hus-
bands Stones; and said, now take the Churle
thus disfigured, and hang him up without dead:
and they went both, and hung the Body upon
the Gallows: and so was the Sheriff deli-
vered. Then said the Lady, now ye be delivered
from all dangers by my Counsel, therefore I
desire you (according to promise) that ye wed
me. The Knight said, I have made a boyn
that I shall never wed other so long as I live,
which I shall perform: Then he said, O thou
most shameful and worst of all Women, who
would take thee to wife? an honourable and

The Seven Wise

Loving Knight was thy Husband, who for a little blood that he saw issue out of thy finger died. Now hast thou smitten out two of his Teeth, cut off his Ears and Stones, and made a great wound in his Head; what Devil would marry thee? therefore thou shalt never shame good man more: I will rid thee of thy life; and so drew his Sword, and with one stroak smote off her Head.

Then the Master said unto the Emperoz: My Lord, have you understood what I have said? He answered, right well: Amongst all women this was the worse, and the Knight rewarded her accordingly, that she shuld no more do shame. The Emperoz said, moreover, O good Master, might I but hear my Son speak I should have no care of my self. Then said the Master, to morrow you shall hear him speak, and he shall shew the truth of all the variances betwixt us and the Empress, as I hope, and so took leave of the Emperoz and departed.

How DIOCLESIAN, the Emperors Son complained on the Empress; and how he excused himself to her complaint.

After that all the Masters took counsel how they shuld bring the Child out of Prison, and lead him to the Palace; so they went to the Child in Prison before midday; his

coune

counsel to hear : to whom the Child said, what you will, shall please ; but buse not your selfes how I shall answer, or what I shall say ; so with joy I shall answer all that shall be demanded of me. When the Seven Wise Masters heard that they were exceeding joyful, and clothed him in Purple, and Cloth of Gold ; and two of the Masters went before him ; one on his right hand, and another on his left, and the other three followed him, and before all went twelve men with instruments of Music, who brought him with great melody to the Palace. When the Emperoz heard the melody he demanded what it was : then it was told him by the standers by, saying, mighty Emperoz, it is your Son which cometh before you, and before all your Lords, to speak and excuse himself of all that is laid to his charge. The Emperoz said, that is good tyding, if I might hear my Son speak. And when the Child was come into the Palace, he rode to his Father, and said unto him : Hail my most dear and Royal Father.

And when the Emperoz heard the voice of his Son, he was so glad, that for joy he fell to the earth, but his Son hasted to take up his Father again, and when he came to himself, then began the Son to declare the whole matter to his Father : and there came so great a multitude to the Palace, to hear the Child speak, and

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the noise of them was so great, that the Child could not be heard. The Emperoz considering that, caused Mony to be thrown into the Streets, that the People therewith should be bussed out of the Palace, the better to hear the Child speak: but they regarded not the Mony. When the Emperoz perceived that, he commanded silence on pain of death: And when they were all still, the Child began to speak as followeth: O most dear Father, before I speak any thing, I intreat you, that the Empress with all her Chamber-Maids may be present. So the Emperoz commanded the Empress with all her Maids to come without delay. The Empress hearing that (in great fear) came with her Maids: and the Child bade

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them to stand before the people on a roe, that he might see them. Then said the Child, Sir, behold the Chamber-Maid that standeth there in green, (whom you know the Empress loveth above all other) command her to be unclothed before us all, and see what she is. The Emperoz said, dear Son, that would shame us all, to have a woman stand naked before us; he said, if it be a woman it is my shame; if not, let the shame abide in her. When she was unclothed, she appeared to be a man, whereat they wondred.

The Complaint of the Emperors Son. on the Empress.

Then said the Son unto the Father, behold this Ribauld hath many a night lain with your wife in your Chamber, and hath defiled your Bed, and him the Empress loved above all others, which thing you did not know.

When the Emperoz had seen these things, he with great indignation gave command that both the Empress and Ribauld shoulde be burnt; but the Son answered: My Lord and Father, make no haste to give judgment, till I have reproved her for the grievous slanders she did falsly accuse me off, and declared how unrightly she hath complained of me, and sought all means how to take my life. Then said the Emperoz: My dear Son, I commit all the judg-
ment

2. The Seven Wives

ment into your hands. The Empress wroght, if she be found a lyar, the Law shall give sentence against her: but my Royal Father, when you sent for me, at her earnest request, then I with my Masters beheld the Stars, by which I perceived, that if I should have spoken unto you, or any living Creature within the space of seven days, I should have died a most shameful death, and for that cause only I did forbear to speak until this present.

And wheras the Empress most unjustly hath accused me, that I would have ravished her, therein she lyeth falsly; for she most adulterously provoked me to defile the Bed of my most gracious Lord and Father the Emperour. And when she in no wise could bring me thereto, she took Pen, Ink, and Paper, and bade me write the cause wherefore I would not yield. And when I had written the cause thereof, and how I would not my Fathers Orchard defile, then she began to tear her Cloaths, and scratch her Visage, so that it gushed forth with blood, and cryed with a loud voice: This your Son (having a mind full of lust) would have wronged your Princely Bed, and I resisting his lust, most inhumanely hath he torn my flesh. When the Emperour heard this, he beheld her with a full countenance, and said in this manner: O wretched Woman, was not thy Ribauld sufficient to fulfil thy foul and lecher-

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opus appetite, but wouldst also have made my Son: Then fell the Empress at the Emperors feet, and cryed for mercy. The Empero^r said: O thou cursed and unhappy woman, thou askest forgiveness, but art worthy of none, for thou hast deserved to die in three respects: first, in that thou hast committed Adultery: secondly, in that thou most lacivously hast provoked my Son to a most abominable sin, and laid the crime falsly and unjustly upon him: Thirdly and lastly, in that thou hast every day incited me by shyn false tales to put my Son to death: therefore the Law shall have its course against thee, and condemn thee unto death, as thou hast deserved.

Then answered his Son, Most Noble Fazher, you know well that for her leassing, I was dayly led to hanging: But my Masters with the help of God hath delivered me: O my most honourable Lord and Fazher, it was told you by the Empress, that I should also (by the help of my Masters) depose you: and that I did labour by all means to destroy you, and to sit in your Throne: would you not then have much grieved: have you not the whole Command and Government of this your Kingdom: Wherefore then should I not use all the skill I habe to help you, my most honoured Fazher, rather then any way to destroy you: and seeing from you I have my living, I will repute you my Sovereign

The Seven Wise

Right Lord and Father, during my life, and not in any manner despise you of your Honour, but buste my self about governing the same, and all your commands I shall fulfil: but it is as the Father that cast his Son into the Sea to drown him, because he said he should live to be a greater Lord than his Father was; and yet the Son by providence was saved, and became greater than his Father, and yet was no hindrance to him, but profited them much: also you see, that my life and carriage is never like to hinder you, but shall be to your comfort. Then said the Emperoz; blessed be the Almighty God, and the hour I begat thee, and desired such a Son, that I find so expert in all things; tell me an Example, by which we may perfectly understand thy wisdom, and my heart the better to enjoy thee.

Then said the Son, honourable Father, command first silence to be made, that I be not letted till I have done: and when that is ended, give Sentence according to Law upon me and the Empress. Then commanded the Emperoz silence, and the Child began to tell in ample manner as followeth.

The

The Example of DIOCESIAN the
Emperors Son.

There was a Knight which had but one Son
that he loved right dear in the beginning,
as ye have loved me, whom he delivered to a
Master that dwelt in a far Country, to be brought
up in Learning and knowledge. This Child
as he waxed in years, increased in wisdom and
knowledge very much. And when he had been
with his Master seven years, his Father desired
to see him, and sent Letters that he should come
again into his Country, and visit his Friends
as you sent for me. The Child was obedient
to his Father and came; At whose coming he
did exceedingly joy, for that he was grown as
well in comeliness of Body, as in Doctrine and
Learning, and to every man appeared pleasant
and gentle.

It happened upon a day that the Father and
Mother sitting at the Table, the Child serving
them, a Rightingale came flying before the
window where they sat, and began to sing
so sweetly that they marvelled. And the
Knight said: O how sweetly this Bird singeth!
Well were he that could understand
Song, and shew the interpretation thereof.
Then said the Son: my worshipful Father, the
Song of this Rightingale I could declare, but
I fear your displeasure. The Father said: say



boldly my Son the interpretation of the Bird,
 and ye shall prove whether I be angry or not;
 but I shall mark well the cause of my anger.
 When the Son heard that, he said, the Righte-
 ingale said in her Song, That I shall become a
 great Lord, honoured of all men, namely of my
 Father, who shall bring me water to wash, and
 my Mother shall hold the Towel. The Father
 said, thou shalt never have such service of us,
 nor such dignity shall follow thee, and in great
 madness and madness he took his Son upon
 his shoulders, and ran to the Sea, and cast him
 in, and said: lie there Interpreter. The
 Childe could swim, and swimming to Land,
 where he was four dayes without meat or
 drinke: the fift day there came a Ship, and as
 the

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the Child saw that, he called to the Ship-men, and saide for the love of God deliver me from death. The Ship-men saw it was a fair young man, and had compassion on him, and with the Boat fetched him aboard, and carried him into a far Country and sold him to a Duke. The Child grew very proper and fair, and the Duke loved him, and had him greatly in favour.

Upon a time the King of that Realm called all the great Lords and Noble-men within the Realm together, to sit in Council. This Duke then prepared to go to the said Council; and giving great regard to the wisdom of the Child, took the Child with him. And when they were assembled before the King and his Council of His well beloved Lords and Friends, he said the King, Will you know the cause wherefore I have assembled you? They answered all hader (Sovereign, Lord) at your command. Then said the King, it is a secret that I shall tell you; if any man can declare what it signifieth if I smear him by my Crown, I will give him my only Daughter in Marriager, and he shall be my fellow in the Realm so long as I live; and after my death shall possess my whole Kingdom. And the Mystery is this: These wabens follow me still wheresoevet I go, casting out with such horrible biting, that the pain is grievous for me to hear them, and much more to behold these looks; wherefore if there

there be any man which knoweth the cause of this their earnest following of me, and can shew what they mean by their crying, and avoid them away from me, without doubt I shall fulfil this promise that I have made. And as the King had thus said, there was none found in all the Council, that understood the cause, or could drive away the Ravens. Then said the Child unto the Duke: my Lord, think you the King will perform what he hath promised? Will you, said the Duke, that I give the King knowledge of what you can do? Then the Child said: I will my life pledge that I shall make good what I have said. When the Duke heard that, he went to the King and said: my Lord and King, here is a young man that doth promise to satisfie you, in all that you desire touching these Ravens, if you will fulfil what you have promised. The King spake by the Crozon of his Kingdom, the which I have promised shall be fulfilled. Then he brought the Child before the King; and when the King beheld him, he spake unto him after this manner: O fair Child, can you answer this my question? the Child answered, Yea, my Lord, and that in the best maner: Your question is, Wherfore the Ravens follow you, and horribly call upon you? To which I answer: It happened, that there were two Ravens, a Male and a Female, that brought out of them

MASTER S.

There was a Rauen, and in that place where
was a great Famine and scarcity of all manner
of food, where Men, Beasts, and Birds had so
want a sow the third Rauen was at that time
very young, and not able to fly alredy to get
her living. The Female she lost it, seeking how
she might get her own living, and came no more
to the Feasting. The Male seeing that, with
great penitence and labour fed the young Rauen
till he was able to fly: and when the Death
was gone, the Female Rauen returned home
again to the young Rauen, and would accom-
pany with him; but the Male seeing that, would
have driven her away, saying: She in his great
necessity left his company, and therefore no man
should have no fellowship with her. So he re-
solved, that he had in his hatching great paine
and sorrow, and suffered much penitence, and for
that cause she should rather follow his company
than the Male.

For this cause my Sovereign Lord did en-
lawn you, asking which of them shall have com-
pany with the young Rauen, also this cause
cause of this horrible damour that they make
raily unto you. But my honoured Lord, when
you have given sentence, you shall never more
be troubled with their crying. Then answere d
the King: because the Female hath so taken
the young Rauen in his necessity, so it was done
with justice, that she should not follow him, but

2 The Seven Wife

soe he to helpe this fellowship. And whereas the Smith, it hat him hauching and bringynge forth. She had great pain and travell, that he haue done, so her pain was turned into joy, as somes she saide the young Raven in the wylde. Item Regard the Hale is the cause of the generation of every Beast of the earth, and every fowle of the air; and also because the young Raven in his necessite was sustaineid, and fed by the Hale, therefore I conclude both for judgment and sentence definitive, that the young Raven shal abide with the Hale, and not with the Female.



When the Ravens heard that sentence, with gretar noise and cry they flew up into the air, and were no more seen in all the region. Item This done, the King demanded of the young man,

MASTERS.

man, what his name was : he answerd, I am called Alexander : Then said the King, I will that you grant me one request, which is, that from henceforth you take me, and none other, for your Father : for you shall have my Daughter to wife, and the whole Government and possession of my Realm. Young Alexander abode still there with the King, and every man did exceedingly love him ; for he began to haunt Jests and Turneys, wherein he always won the Prize before all other in Ægypt, so that his peer was not to be found, neither was there so hard a question put to him, but he could make known the true sence and meaning thereof.

At that time there was an Emperoz named Titus, who excelled in courtesie and curiositie all all other Emperozes, Kings, and Princes in the world ; insomuch that such fame flew over the world of it ; that whosoever would profit in cunning, manners, or behaviour, must go to the Emperozis Court. When Alexander heard thereof, he said to the King : my most honourable Lord and Father, you know that the world is full of fame of the Emperoz, that it is very delectable to abide in his Court, wherefore, if it please you my renowned Lord and Father, I would very gladly go to his Court that I may obtain more wisdom, and grow prompted in Manners and Behaviour, than now I am. Whereupon answered the King : it pleasest

The Seven Wises

me right well; but take with you plenty of gold and silver, and other necessaries, that you my honour there may save, and have also that which is to you most requisite and necessary. And it seemeth unto me most expedient, that before your departure you do marry my Daughter.

Then answered Alexander; Will it please you my Lord to spare me at this time, and at my return I shall wed her with all honour unto her appertaining. The King answered; Since it is your will to go unto the Emperors Court, I give my consent: then Alexander took his leave of the King, and took with him abundance of treasure, and went to the Emperors Court; where when he was come, with many followers he went before the Emperor, and fell upon his Knees, and did him reverence.

The Emperor rose from his Seat Imperial, and kissed him, and asked whence, and what he was, and wherfore he was come: he answered, I am Son and Heir to the King of Egypt, and am come to serve your most high Majestie, if it please you to accept of me. The Emperor said, he was heartily welcome, and committed him to his Steward, and made him his Carver. The Steward ordained him a fair Chamber; and provided all things that were necessary to the same; and Alexander behan-
him

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himself so well, that in short time he was beloved of all people.

Not long after came the Kings Son of France to serve the Emperoz, and to learn good qualities and comely behaviour : him the Emperoz received honorably, demanding his name ; and of what kindred he was come : he answered, I am Son to the King of France, and I have to name Lodowick your Servant : Then said the Emperoz, I have made Alexander my Carver, and you shall be my Cup-bearer, that always ye may serve at my Table ; and commanded the Steward to assign him a Lodging, whom he placed with Alexander. These two were so like in stature, visage, and condition, that hardly the one might be known from the other, but that Alexander was more cuming than Lodowick, for he was Feminine and Shame-faced ; and these young men loved well.

The Emperoz had only one Daughter, named Florentine, right fair and gracious, that should be his Heir, whom he loved intirely ; she had a Court and Servants assigued : to her the Emperoz every day accustomed to send from his Table of his dainties, in token of love, by Alexander, insomuch that the Daughter began to have him marbelously in her favour, because of his wise and comely behaviour.

Upon a day Alexander had such business, that he served not at the Table, nor none other

The Seven Wise

in his room: Lodowick perceiving that, served for him, and as soon as he had served in his last service upon his knee, the Emperour commanded him to bear a Dish, to his Daughter as he was wont, thinking he was Alexander. Then Lodowick went to the Emperours Daughter, saluting her with great Reverence, and set the meat before her; till then he had not seen her. She perceiving it was not Alexander, said to him, What is your Name, and whose Son are you? He answered her, Madam, I am the Kings Son of France, and my name is Lodowick: she said, I thank you for your pains: and then he departed. In the mean time came Alexander to the Table, and they fulfilled their Service.

Dinner being done, Lodowick went to bed sore sick: Alexander perceiving that, went to his Chamber, and said unto him, O my best beloved Friend and Fellow, how is it with you, and what is the cause of your infirmity? He answered, the cause I know not, but I am sore sick, and fear I cannot escape death. Alexander said: The cause of your infirmity I know well; for to day as you bear the meat to the Emperours Daughter, ye beheld her beauty so fervently, that your heart was ravished with her love. Whereupon he answered, O Alexander, all the Physicians in the World could not more truly judge my sickness, but I fear

fear it will be my death. Then said Alexander, be of good comfort, I will help you unto my power. Whereupon forthwith went to a Merchant, and bought with his own money a fair Cloth, set with precious stones, unknown to Lodowick, and presented it in his behalf to the Princes: As soon as she beheld it, she asked where he had that costly Cloth: he said, Madam, of the Son of the most Christian King of France, who lendeth me your lord your love; for he having but once beheld your Princely face, is grown sick, even unto death; wherefore if you suffer him to perish, you shall never recover honour.

Then said she: Good Alexander, would you counsel me to lase my Virginity? God defend that; and be ye sure Alexander, that for such messages you shall never winch thanks of me; therefore go out of my sight, and speak no more thereon. When Alexander heard that, did obeysance, and departed.

The next day Alexander went again to the City, and bought a Chaplet that was twice the value of the Cloth, and went to the Princes Chamber, and gave it her on the behalf of Lodowick. And when she saw that costly gift, she said unto him: I marvel that so often you have seen and spoken with me, and have not done your own errand in speaking for your self, but for another. Then answered he, Madam, I have not done so, because my lady is

The Seven W^he^m

not to be compared with yours! and with heare
was never so wounded: and he that hath a good
fellow, is bound for to do him true fellowship.
And therefore now excent^{nt} Princely, or else
most abundant pity, have compassion on him,
and make him whole that you have so fayre
wounded, that it be not for ever paynes to your
cruelty and hatenes of heart; he alredy red hym,
go your way, for at this tyme I will give you
no answer, and as he heard that he departed.

And the next day he went to the City, and
bought a Cytole that was of more value, than
cossyce than the Chaylet was, and presented it
to her in the behalfe of Lodowick. and when she
beheld that gift so pretious, she said unto Alexander
and said to Lodowick that he come to my
Chamber about the thre hout in the night, and
he shall find the doore open: and Alexander hearing
that, was glas, and went to his felloe and
said: my best beloved fellow be of good confort,
for I have conquerid the prisoners for you, and
this night I shall bring thee to my Chamber.
And when that was said, he started up as though
he had a waked out of his sleep, and his spirite
revived, and for great joy became well: the next
night Alexander took Lodowick and brought him
to the Chamber of the Lady, where in hys
he was in solace all night: and from that time
forth, all her mind was upon him, so that there
was but one love between them both.

End

MASTERES.

11 And so alder that Lodowick used ofte to come to
that towne, so that in processe of time it came to
the eare of the Knights and Gentlemen of the
Court; how that the Emperors Daughter was
known by Lodowick: And they conspired a
mouing themselves how they might finde him,
and trap him, so as to take him. As Alexander
had knowledge thereof, he armed him to mish-
ant them; and when the Knights understood
that, they feare d Alexander, and suffered his fel-
lowes to go in peace. Alexander many tyme put
himselfe in jeopardy for him. He not knowing
thereof: but the Princes knew it well.

11 In short tyme after came Letters to Alexan-
der of the death of the King of Egypt, that he
should haue many receaved his knyghtes
with their handes; and that he had haue
the knyghtes said to Lodowick, and also whiche
departing ou wherefore they were sorrowful. He
said I haue the carpet of my honourable
Lord, I pray you to understand, I haue per-
ced letters of the death of my Father, whereof
the heiret he go and receiven the knyghtes
done, and that you will be plased to give me
leave to depart; I haue for all the benefites that I
done, I offer my self and all my goods: and that
ther than I should by my going any way displease
your my Lord, I will for sake all my Realm, and
abide with you still.

Then

The Seven Wives

Then said the Emperour, know you for certaine
that for your departure I am right hevy, for
you were the best Servant in my Court : but it
becometh not an Emperour to hinder his Servants
from their advancements ; but rather promyses
them to higher honour : therefore go you unto
our Treasurer, and he shall deliver you as much
Gold as you will have, and in the Name of
God (and my Blessing) go into your Country.
And thus Alexander had leave of the Emperour,
and bade him farewell : and they were also sor-
rowful for his departure, for he was beloved of
all

Lodowick with the Princess brought him on
his way seven miles at least : after that Alex-
ander would not suffer them to go any farther :
then fell they both on the ground with great
heaviness. And Alexander took and lifted him
up, and comforted him with faire words, and
said : O Lodowicks, my best beloved fellow ! I
warn you that the secrets betwixt you and my
Lady, you hide as privily as you may, and take
good heed to all things : for I wot another shall
come and be in my stead ; that shall in my you be
the favour and grace that you stand in with
the Emperour, and day and night shall lie in wait
to take you in a fault, and to bring you to
rebuке. Then answered Lodowicks, and said
O Alexander, I shall beware as much as
is possible : but how shall I do when I shall

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want your company: Therefore one thing I shall desire you, that you take this King of me for a remembrance. Then said he, I shall for the love of you gladly receive your King: and yet I shall never without the King forget you: and so he committed them both to God. Then they embrac'd each other about the Neck, killed and departed.

Not long after the Kings Son of Spain, named Guido, was received of the Emperor in the room of Alexander, to whom the Steward assigned Alexanders Chamber: the which was very sore against the will of Lodowick, but he could not help it.

Guido seeing that Lodowick against his will had him in his fellowship, he grew envious against him, so Lodowick for a long time, for fear of the same Guido, kept him from the company of the Lady: nevertheless afterwards, being overcome with her love, sometimes he went again unto her as before. Guido perceiving the same, waited so long thereon, that he knew the truth and was therefore certain that the Princess was by Lodowick known, and he had company with her.

Upon a time it happened that the Emperor stood in the Hall, and praised Alexander for his gentleness and wisdom. Guido hearing that, said: my Lord, he is not so worthy to be commended as you imagine, for he hath a long time

The Seven Wise Men

been a staynor in your House. Then the Emperour said, Tell me how? Guido said, Your
have but one only daughter, which shall be your
Heir, and her Lodowick hath defiled, through
the help of Alexander; and he goeth to her eve-
ry night as it pleaseth him. As soon as the
Emperour heard therenf, he was sore moued, and
Lodowick happened to come through the Hall;
and as the Emperour saw him, he said, What
hear I of that, thou untrue body? if it be pro-
ved, thou shalt die the most shamefulllest death
that can be devised. Lodowick said, my Lord,
what is the cause? Guido answered, I de-
posed here before my Lord, that thou hast de-
filed his only Daughter, and every night
dost fornication with her: and with battel
I shall make it goad upon thy body, with my
body. Then said Lodowick, I am innocent,
and falsly thou dost bely me, and thereupon
I hold the battel, and trust to God thy falsehood
shall come upon thine own head. Then the
Emperour assigned them the day of Combate.
That done, Lodowick went unto the Lady, and
shewed her the cause, and the day of Battel, by
the Emperour assigned, and in what manner
Guido had accused him; and said unto her,
Now it behoveth me to have your counseil, or
else I must die; for you know it would not a-
bait me to have gain-said the Battel, without
I should have yielded my self guilty; Guido is

hardy

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hardy, that his like is none; but Alexander, and I am feeble; and therefore if I fight the Battel against him, I were but a dead man; and so you shall abide rebuke. Then said she, follow my counsel, in that you mistrust your self, go hastily unto my Father, and say, ye have received Letters, whereby you are assured, that the King your Father is sore sick, and lyeth upon his Death-bed, and he desireth to speake with you in person, and to dispose of his Kingdom before he departeth this life: so desire him to give you leave for the love of your Father, to go to visit him, and that he will prolong the day of battel, that in the mean season you may go and come; and when you have gotten leave, as hastily as you can, secretly go to King Alexander, and take him apart, and shew him the cause of your coming, and desire him in this extremity, and he will help and save us.

When Lodowick heard this counsel, it pleased him well, and he did according: and having obtained leave, and respite of the Battel assigned, he departed towards Egypt, and never stayed till he came into King Alexander's Castle. When King Alexander understood his coming, he was very glad, and went to meet him, receiving him honourably, and wondering much at his coming.

Then said Lodowick, O my dear Lord, and best beloved friend, my life and death is in your hands,

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hands, for as you said before, that I should have another fellow, which should lie in wait to espy me and destroy me, without I looked moze wisely to my self; so long as I could I did abstain from her; but afterwards the Kings Son of Spain watched me till he perceiued the truth: in the end he accused me to the Emperoz, so that on the eighth from this day I must be ready to fight with him body against body: and ye know he is a very strong hardy man, and I am weak and feeble: therefore hath Florentine counselled me, that I should not hide this matter from you, for she knoweth you to be a faithful friend, that would not leave us in this necessity.

Then said Alexander, is there any that knoweth of your coming unto me besides Florentine? he answered him, no creature living, for I took leave of the Emperoz to go visit my fathet lying grievously sick. Then Alexander asked him, what counsel hath Florentine given you, and how might I help you? he saio, O my faithful friend, thus she hath counselled me: considering that we be like each other, you should come and perform the battel, and no one would know you but she, and the battel done, I would come again to the Court, and you return to your own Countrey. Then he asked him, when the battel should be: and he said, eight dayes hence.

Then

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Then said Alexander : if I but one day tarry before I depart, I cannot come by the day pre-
fixed, tell me what I shall do, I have bidden all
my Subjects, that to morrow they should come
to my Wedding, and if I should go, then is the
day lost, if I go not to the battel, then Florenz
sine and you are undone : what think you is best,
when Lodowick heard that, he fell to the earth,
and began to sorrow without measure, saying,
sorrow comes suddenly to me on all sides. Then
said Alexander, be of good comfort, for I shall
not forsake you, though I should lose my life and
Kingdom : but hear what I have thought upon :
seeing we are both alike, so that the one cannot
be known from the other ; and as for me, I am
not rightly known here, but my Earons and o^r
ther my Subjects will take you for me, there-
fore you shall here abide, and marry my wife
in my stead, and hold the Feasts and Nuptials,
and do all things as if my self were present,
but when you come to bed with my wife, look
yon where be true and faithful, and I shall wish
but tarrying take my horse, and ride where the
battel shall be ; and if God give me victory, I
will come again secretly, and you shall go again
unto your best beloved. This done Alexander
bade Lodowick farewell, and took his journey to-
wards the Emperors Court to fight the battel
with Guido : and Lodowick carried in Egypt
instead of King Alexander.

Rept

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Next morning came Lodowick, as though he had been King Alexander, and solemnly in the face of the Church he espoused with Alexander's wife, and solemnized the marriage feast, with great Royalty of delicacies and dainties, plenty of all wines, and divers instruments of Musick, with great joy and cheer for the Noblemen, and all other that were there assembled. And when the night was come, he went to bed with the Queen, and laid between him and her a naked sword: whereat she wondering, but saying nothing, and so he lay with her every night while Alexander was gone.



Now King Alexander at the day prefixed, came unto the Emperour, and said, O most Sovereign Lord, I have left my Father, being sick.

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sick and in hazard of death: nevertheless I am come to perform my promise, with a full resolution to defend my honour. The Emperoz said, ye do honourably, and according to the valour of a Nobleman; and Fortune shall favour you (I hope) in your righteous quarrel.

And when the Emperoz's Daughter understood that Alexander was come, she sent for him; and when he came to her, she courteously embraced him, and with great joy kissed him, and blessed the time that she saw him again: and demanded where he had left her love Lodowick? Then he declared unto her the whole circumstances, and how he had left him King in his Realm. So he took his leave of her, and went to Lodowick's chamber, no creature thinking but that he was Lodowick, except Florentine only. The next day before Alexander went to the Battle, he said unto the Emperoz in the presence of Guido: My most renowned Sovereign Lord, Guido hath falsely accused me unto your Noble Grace, in saying that I should be so familiar with the Princess your most vertuous and only Daughter, to the great dishonour of your noble person, and hers: I swear by the holy Evangelist, that she was never in any wise known by me, as he hath alledged unto you, which I shall make good upon his body with the aid and help of God.

L

Then

Then answered Guido, yet once I say again, and I swear by the holy Evangelist, and by all that God hath made, that thou hast had knowledge of, and defiled the Emperors Daughter; and that I will make good upon thy head.

Whereupon they leapt upon their Courser, and ran so fiercely one at another, with their Spears, that they both broke and shivered in pieces: Then they drew their Swords, and fought so long, until at last Alexander with great might at one stroke, smote off Guido's head, and sent it unto the Emperors Daughter; whereof she was glad, and bare it unto her Father, and said, Father, behold the head of him that had so falsely defamed you and me.

Whereupon the Emperors perceived the Victory, he sent for Alexander, whom he thought to be Lodowick, and said: O Lodowick, this day your hontour and my Daughters you have saved, you shall be to morrow in my favour, and whosoever shall again defame you, shall for ever stand in my indignation.

Then answered Alexander: God always helpeth them that trust in him, and revengeth wrong done to the innocent: But most renowned Lord, one thing I intreat, that it will please you to give me leave to go see how it standeth with my Father, whom I left soze sick, and if he be any thing apended, I shall incontinently return. Then the Emperors said:

that

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that pleaseth me; but you may in no wise leave me, for I cannot be without your presence.

Alexander having taken leave of the Emperor, with all speed he could he rode back unto his Realm. Lodowick having heard of his return, with much joy met him, and friendly received him, saying, Most true friend of all Friends, tell me how Fortune has favoured you in this your journey and business, and to what end have you brought it? Then he said, Go to the Emperor, and serve him as before, for I have gotten you more favour at his hands than you had before, and have also cut off the head of your greatest enemy.

Then said Lodowick, You have not only at this time saved my life, but preserved me heretofore, which kindness I shall never forget, neither as yet can I requite; but God reward you, and so he departed to the Emperors Court; and there was no man that had any knowledge of the absence of King Alexander, except Lodowick.

When Night was come, he went to Bed to the Queen, and as soon as he was laid, he began sweetly to embrace her, and with friendly words he kissed her. Then said she, you have made this time tedious, in that you have shewed nothing of friendship or love; how may this be? Then said he, Wherefore say you that? he said,

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every night you have laid becwixt us a naked
Sword, and have never turned towards me till
now. And when he heard that, he thought on
the truth of his fellow, and said : O my dear
Lady, it was not done for any ill will, but for
tryal of love. But she said to her self : that love
you shall have no more, but desp te, and I will
be revenger upon thee.



Then there was a Knight that she had a lit-
tle loved, and she began to lebe him more
and more, till at the last they sought how they
might destroy the King; and therefore they
got poison and poysoned him. So that if he had
not been strong of comp'cion, he had died
thereof; for it wraught sore, that it caused
him to be a most foul and horrible Leper,

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as was ever seen upon the earth. The Lords and Prellemen of the said Realme, and the Queen also seeing this, despised him and said, It behoveth not a Leper to reign over us, for he cannot beget any beautiful Heirs, and so he was deposed of his Dignity Royal, and driven out of his Realm.

In the meau time dyed the Emperour of Rome, and Lodowick married his Daughter, and after that Lodowicks Father died, so that Lodowick reigned both Emperour of Rome, and King of France at once.

When King Alexander heard of that, he thought in himself, Now my fellow reigneth, and ruleth both the Empire of Rome, and the Realm of France; To whom may I go better, than unto him, for whom I have often ventured ready, and took with him his Staff and Clapper, and went towards the Emperours Country.

And when he was come nigh the gate, he sate down among other poor Lazars, expecting the giving of Alms: and upon a sudden as the Emperour went out of the Palace, all the poor Lazars began to ring their Clappers, and good King Alexander did as the other, but there was no Alms given him, so he tarried until the Emperour was set and served at the Table.

Then went King Alexander unto the Gate, and knocked; and the Porter asked who was

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there ; Alexander answered him, I am a poor despised man, I pray you for the love of God, turn your sight from my visage, but for the reward of God, do my message unto the Empero^r. He asked, What was the matter ? Alexander said, Go and tell him here is a Lazar right horrible ugly to see, which prayeth him for the love of God and King Alexander, that he will grant him this day to eat his Alms before him upon the earth in his Hall. The Porter answered, I wonder you dare desire that of my Lord, for all the Hall is full of Lords and Noblemen, and if they should behold you, they would abhor their meat ; but forasmuch as you have required it of me solemnly, for the love of God I shall do your errand, whatsoever happeneth ; and so he went and did his message to the Empero^r. When the Empero^r heard the Porter name Alexander King of Aegypt, he said to the Porter, Go thy ways, and bring him before me, how horrible and ugly soever his visage be, and ordain him a place before me, that he may eat in my presence.

The Porter brought him immediately, and ordained him a Place, and set him to meat before the Empero^r, and when he had well refreshed himself, he said unto one of the Empero^rs Servants, My dear Friend, do me this errand unto the Empero^r, say unto him, that I pray him for the love of God and King Alexander

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der, that he will send me his Cup full of Wine. The Servant said, for the love of God I will do it, but I believe it will not be; for if you should but touch my Lord's Cup he will by no means drinck of the same again; nevertheless he did the errand.

And when the Emperoz heard him name King Alexander, he commanded his Cup to be filled of the best Wine, and carried to him, which Wine when he had received, he put into his Bottle, and took the King that Lodowick had given him, and put it into the Cup, and sent it again unto the Emperoz.

When the Emperoz saw the King, he instantly knew that it was the same he had given unto King Alexander, in friendship, when he departed from him, and thought in his heart that King Alexander had been dead, or else that this man very strangely came by the King, and commanded presently that the Lazar should not depart till he had spoken with him; for in no wise could he have any knowledge of him, nor yet repute him for Alexander.

After Dinner was done, the Emperoz took the sick man apart, and asked him how he came by that King? King Alexander demanded if he knew the King? The Emperoz said, I know it well. Alexander said, Wot you also to whom you gave it? the Emperoz said, I wot right well how it is. Then said Alexander,

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der, that you know not me: for I am Alexander unto whom you gave the same. When the Empero^r heard that, he fell to the ground for sorrow, and tore his Robes, and with many sighings and bewailings, said: O Alexander, you are the one half of my scul: how is your goodly and delicate Body now so unclean and infected, that was so fair and pleasant to behold? He answered: This is happened unto me for the great fidelit^y you have done me in the bed with my wife, when you laid a naked sword betwix^t you and her; wherefore she became wroth, and hated me, so that she and a Knight that in former time she had loved, have poysoned me as you see, and driven me out of my Realm.

And when the Empero^r heard that, he took him about the neck and kissed him, and said: O my most dear and intirely beloved Brother, I sorrow to see you in this great perple xity. I would to God I might die for you. But my most dear friend, suffer patiently a little time till we have sent for all the wise Masters in Physick, to have their Advice, if there be any remedy to be had or hope of recovery of your health; and if it be possible to help you, we shall neither spare Lordship, Empire, nor any other goods temporal, to make you whole and sound.

In the mean time he was brought into a fair Chamber, richly furnished with all things requisite for his ease and health. Then in all haste

he sent Messengers through all parts of the world, for the most expert Physicians that might be found, of which within a Month after, were assembled before the Emperour thirty, that were expert and skilful in that Science; to which the Emperour said: my well beloved Masters, I have a friend that is very grievously infected with a foul Leprosie, whom I would very gladly were healed, and made as sound and whole as ever he was; sparing neither for gold or silver, or any other cost whatsoeuer, so that he might recover his health again. Then answered the Masters, All this is possible to be done in Physick, you shall soon understand, after we have seen the person: and when they saw him, they knew the cause of his infirmity, and said it was incurable scall Physicians living.

When the Emperour heard that, he was right sorry, and committed it to Almighty God, calling unto him most of the Religious men that dwelt near the Court: and a number of the people, besides many other devout persons, desiring them earnestly to make Prayer to Almighty God, that he would vouchsafe his infinite goodness, to make whole his deat friend King Alexander. And he himself (with many others) fasted and prayed to Almighty God for the speedy recovery of his Friend.

Now upon a time, as King Alexander was at

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his Prayers, there came unto him a voice from Heaven, saying : Tell Lodowick the Emperor, that if he with his own hands will slay those two Children which his Empress had at one burthen, and with the blood of them wash and bathe thy body, thy flesh shall become as fair, and as clear as the bodies of these little Children; if not, thou must never look to be cured whilst breath is in thy body ; and so farewell.

Now when King Alexander had heard this strange voice, he began to think with himself what it was, and whence it came ; then he replied unto himself, This Vision is not to be shewed ; for it is contrary to humane nature, that any man should slay his own Sons for the recovery of a Stranger.

The Emperor continued night and day in prayer with great devotion, earnestly praying to God for King Alexander, never ceasing until a voice came unto him and said, How long will you thus call and cry unto me ? When it was openly shewed unto King Alexander, by what means he might recover his health, and his body become clear without either spot or blemish.

The Emperor hearing that voice, he went to King Alexander, and said unto him, Of all Friends the best and most true, blessed be the most high and everlasting God, who never faileth them that put their trust in him ; of whom

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Whom I have knowledge, that it is shewed unto you, how you may be recovered of your Leprosie; wherefore I intreat you that you will plainly lay open unto me how it may be done, for the restoring of your former health, that we may have joy together; and if you need any thing that may do you good, I will fulfil it unto my Power; yea, and for your health give all that I have.

Alexander said, Sir, I dare not shew you how I may be cured of my leprosie, for it exceedeth, and it is a thing against nature, therefore I will not as yet shew it you, howbeit I have a great trust and confidence in you.

The Emperoz said, Alexander, put your trust in me still; whatsoever is possible to be done for recovering your health, I will do it; and therefore conceal nothing from me, I pray you.

Then said Alexander, I have of God knowledge, that if you will slay your two Sons with your own hands, and wash me in their blood, I shall be whole, therefore I have not shewed it unto you: for methinks it is against nature, that the Father should slay his own Children, for the health of a Stranger. The Emperoz said, Say not that you are a Stranger, for I love you as my self, and therefore if I had ten Children, I should not spare one for your health.

Afterwards the Emperoz espied his time

when

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when the Empress was out of the way, and went into the chamber where the children slept, and drew his knife, and cut both their throats, and gathered the blood into a Vessel, and then bathed Alexander therewith: and when he was



bathed, his body was as fair and clean, as though it had been a young Child. Then the Emperoz had a perfect knowledge of his visage, and kissed him, saying O good Alexander, now I see you in the form I have oftentimes delighted in.

Pray God be Almighty God, that ever I had these children, by whom your health is restored, and your body made pure and clean. And as yet none had knowledge of the death of these Children, save the Emperoz and Alexander.

And when the Emperoz saw that good King Alexan-

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Alexander was perfectly healed, he said unto him, I will obtain you an honourable company, and you shall go hence about five miles; and the next day send me a Messenger, and let me know the day of your return. And I shall then with great solemnity come and meet you, and you shall remain with me until I may conveniently provide for the recovery of your King.

This Counsel pleased King Alexander well, and was performed: for on the next day following there came a Messenger to the Emperour certifying him of the return of King Alexander.

When the Empress heard these tydings, she rejoiced and said unto the Emperour: O my well beloved Lord, have you not just cause to rejoice, seeing Alexander King of Ægypt is now coming to see you, whom of long time you have not seen: if you please to go and meet him with your Lords and Gentlemen, I shall follow with my Ladies and Gentlewomen; and as yet she knew not of the death of her two Children.

Then rode the Emperour and Empress with a great company of Lords and Ladies to meet with good King Alexander: and when they met, with great reverence they received him, and with great joy brought him unto the Palace; and at the time of Dinner, Alexander was placed between the Emperour and Empress, and all the mirth and cheer that she could make, she shewed unto him.

WATHEM

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When the Emperoz saw that, he was glad, and so exceeding well pleased, that he said, O mine own Florentine, it glads me above all things, that you make unto King Alexander so good cheer. Then answered the Empress, Wherefore should I not, is not his company unto us more precious than Gold and Silver? but unto you, my renowned Lord, much more, for by his means you attain'd unto so great honour and dignity, and by him many times you have been saved from death. The Emperoz answered: Then I pray you dearly beloved Florentine, heare my words: saw you not that deformed Lazar, which yesterday late before our Table, and prayed me for the love of God, and good King Alexander, that I would give him drink? She said, my honourable Lord, I saw him well; a more horrible man I never beheld. Then said the Emperoz, I demand of you: put case that he were King Alexander, and that he could not be made whole but with the blood of your two Sons, which you in one day brought into the World, would you that their blood should be shed, that he might bathe himself therein, and therefore have perfect health, and comely favour, as you now see him have? She answered, My renowned Lord and Husband, Wherefore demand you of me that Question? I tell you of a truth, That if I had ten Sons I should gladly slay them with my own hands,

to prepare for him a Bath, and would wash him therein my own self, rather than I should leave him in such a loathsome and miserable case, so horrible to behold, and in such danger of healths withal. God might send us more Children, but such a Friend were a thing impossible for us ever hereafter to find throughout the whole world.

When the Emperoz heard this, he was well pleased and said, O my Loving Empress, had you rather have your Children dead, then Alexander should languish in his Leprosie: Then I shall shew you the whole truth of the matter: That foul Lazar which you saw was Alexander, that sitteth here by us, and is made whole with the blood of our two Sons, and they are dead.

As soon as the Empress heard that, she began with extremity of sorrow mournfully to cry out, as nature would she should, although she had said before, she had rather see her Children dead, then Alexander remain in such misery.

The Nourishers of the Children understanding this presently with great crying ran to the Nursery: and great bewailing was made through the Emperors Court for his two Sons, and when the Nourishers came to the Chamber, they found the Children playing, and singing a Song of praise and thanksgiving, to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, for restoring their lives. Then they returned with all haste

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unto the Emperoz and Empresz, and shewed unto them how the Children were living, and that about their Throats where they were cut, they had Circles of Gold: whereof were great joy and gladness in all the Court, with thanksgiving to Almighty God, for that exceeding great miracle and wonderful work.

After that the Emperoz with a great multitude assembled together, went with King Alexander into Agypt, and set him again in possession of his Realme. The Queen and the Knight, who had lived long together in Adultery, he caused to be slain. And when this was done, the Emperoz had one only Sister, whom he married unto King Alexander.

When King Alexander had obtained all his Realme again, and was set in rest and peace, the Emperoz returned unto his Empire: and King Alexander so wisely and politickly governed himself in his Affairs, that he overcame his rebellious Enemies.

And when he was seated in his Glory, Peace and Right, he thought upon his Father and Mother (by whom he was cast into the Sea, who dwelled in far parts) and sent a Messenger, to let them know, that the King of Agypt upon such a day would be with them, to view those parts of the Country, and to sport himself, and to make a Royal feast. When the Messenger was there come, they received him with hono-

bountiful entertainments, and large gifts, and sent him back, saying, that their services should be ready at all times to do the Kings pleasure, but that they could not possibly discern that he should vouchsafe them that honour, whereof they were not worthy, as to visit them in those parts, to sport himself there a while.

The Messenger returned and shewed the King how willingly they would receive him, and in what manner they did reward him, and how faithful they were and ready to do him service, wherewith the King was well pleased. When the set day was come, the King with a fair company rode towards his Fathers house, who was to his Father and Mother unknown.

When the King came near his Fathers Castle, the Knight rode joyfully to meet him, and when he came nigh to the King he alighted, and did him reverence upon his knees; but the King took him up presently, and commanded him to take horse again, and so they rode together unto the Castle.

And when they were come thither, the Mother came unto him and fell upon her knees, and welcomed him gladly; and the King took her up as lovingly and kissed her: she said unto him. My Lord, you do us (unworthy) this honour with the presence of your most honourable Personage which we shall never be able to deserve.

After the meat was all ready, and the time

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of day was come to go to dinner, the Father came with a Basin and Ewer, and the Mother with a Towel, saying, Sir, all things are ready, please you to wash; and when the King saw that he smiled, and said to himself: Now is the Song of the Nightingale true, that my Father and my Mother should gladly do as I have said, if my self would thereunto consent: But he would not suffer them to do him any such service, saying, your age is to be honoured, and therefore I would have none of it; and then he called one of his Servants, whom he commanded to do that Service. Then said the Knight, you will not suffer us to do it for our honour, because we are not worthy thereof. The King said, have I not said, that for your age I forbear you. When the King was set at the Table, he set his Mother on the right hand of him, and his Father on the left; and then, as much as they might, or durst, did behold his favour and countenance.

After dinner the King entred into a faire Chamber, and made the Knight with his Lady to follow him, and commanded all others to void their presence.

When they were all alone, the King said, have you no Children? they answered, We have neither Son nor Daughter. And the King said, had you never any? the Knight answered, we had one Son, but he is long ago dead,

dead ; the King asked of what death he died ? And the Knight said a natural death. Then the King said, if I find it otherwise, you are found in a most horrid fault. Then asked the Knight, My most honourable and renowned Lord, wherefore enquire you so earnestly after our Son ? the King answered, not without just cause, and therefore I must, and will know of what death he died : if you will not tell me, I shall cause you both to die most shameful deaths.

When they heard that, they fell upon the ground on their knees before him, and asked his pardon and forgiveness. But the King would not suffer them to kneel, but took them up, and said : To that intent I came not unto your house, to eat your bread and to betray you : But say to me the very truth, and you shall be pardoned, for it is given me to understand that you have put him to death, and if that you be found culpable therein, and come to judgment, you must die a most shameful death. Then said the Knight, My most honourable Lord, save my life, and I will shew you the very truth. The King said, fear not, for I shall do you no harm. Then answered the Knight, and said, Most dread Sovereign Lord, we had a Son, that was wise, learned, and intelligent : and upon a time as he stood before us, and served at the Table, there came to the window a Night-

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ingale that sung exceeding sweetly, whose song
he began to interpret, and to tell us what it
meant, and said, this Bird singeth, that I shall
become so great and mighty a Lord that your
my Father shall be glad to hold a Basin with
water to wash my hands, and my Mother a
Towel, that if I will suffer it.

And when I heard that, I was sore moved,
and vexed in my mind, and so I took him upon
my shculder, and cast him into the Sea for to
drown him. Then said the King, what evil had
come to you, if he had been made so great? He
thinks it shold have been for your honour and
profit. The Knight said, my Renowned Lord,
it was no reason, but woodness. The King an-
swered: 't n as a great folly in you, that you
would do against the Ordinance of God. And
now you shall know for trut h, I am your Son
that you cast into the Sea, and God of his great
mercy hath saved me, and by his grace brought
me to this estate and dignity.

The Father and Mother hearing that, with
fear and joy amazed, fell flat unto the ground:
whom he lovingly took up, saying: Fear not,
but rather rejoice, for you shall suffer no harm:
but my exaltation shall be to your glory, and
profit: and so he kist his Father and Mother
with great joy. Then began the Mother to
weep greatly; and the King laid to her, leave
off your sorrowing, and be of good cheer, for in
my

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my Reign you shall be honoured above me during my life: And he took them with him into his Kingdom, where they dwelled a long time in honour and joy; and ended their days with comfort and love of all the People.

Here follows the Application of the Example to the purpose.

Then said Dioclesian the Emperors Son, Lord, 'have you understood what I have said?' the Emperor said, right well: then said the Son, my most honored and redoubted Father, although that God hath given and endued me with wisdom and understanding above others, that shall not be an impairing of your honour and might; but more for the preservation and maintenance of the same: so in like manner, the Kings excellent Majestie, which was nothing to the hinderance of the Father, but this rather for his worship, profit and greater comfort. For as long as they lived, it was in very great joy and mirth, that they were loved of the People, and honoured of the Kingdom. Then said the Emperor, my beloved Son, I will wholly resigne all the Empire unto you to govern & rule: for I perceive well by your Narration, that you have to me declared, that it is best for me, and most for my ease, that I now leave this worldly and tedious business, and the labour and care of a King, and betake me to my rest.

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rest and ease, for I am old and feeble. Then answered the Son, and said unto his Father, My most honourable Lord and Father, so shall it be, but as long as you live, you shall have the Authority and Government of the Empire at your command, as it appertaineth unto an Emperoz; but in all the busynesses that are laborious and troublesome, I will always be ready to minister any service that possible I can, according to my bounden duty.

How Judgment was given upon the Empress, and how that she and her Lover were both put to death.

Then the Emperoz commanded the Judges and Justices to sit in Judgment, and to bring again the Empress before them, with the Ladies, and also the Ribauld, her best beloved, cloathed in the vesture and habit of a Woman, whom he did cause to stand next unto the Empress: then the Emperoz Son asked Sentence and just judgment upon them; saying, My most honourable Lord and Father, even as you are Emperoz of the World, and that your Majestie and Power requireth to do true justice unto all your Subjects that desire it; so now I demand, that you this day do give right sentence and true judgment upon the untruth, falsehood and shame, which were put, and alledged

M A S T E R S .

ed unto me by the Empress ; for the which accusations, I have been sometimes led unto the Gallows, and have stood in great jeopardy, and peril of my life , and also that she hath been to you untrue of her Wedy, as you have seen by good proof made before you ; and on the which I ask judgment : and therefore command your Justices and Judges to give sentence thereupon, according to Right, Equity and Law.

As soon as the Empress heard this, she fell flat to the earth before the Emperoz, and asked mercy and forgiveness for her just offence and misdoing : but it helped nor profited nothing , for the Son would have right, and desired Judgment. Then spake the Judges and Justices , Her own misdeeds condemn her, and the report of her Lemmon by her kept and found ; therefore we give Sentence against the Empress , that she shall be bound to a Horses Tail, and drawn through all the Streets of the City to the place of Execution, and there be burnt. We judge and give Sentence against the Ribauld : that he shall be quartered and smitten in pieces, and his flesh cast to the Hounds and Birds of the air to devour him : and this Sentence was approved and allowed of by the people.

Hereafter in short time died the Emperoz , and Dioclesian his Son governed and ruled the Empire with great wisdom , and always held and kept his Masters with him in great honour

The Seven Wives

Caesars: By whose counsele and wisdom he governed the Empire; and he excelled all his Predecessors in Riches, and doing Right and Justice: and his Masters so loved him above all others in the World, that many times they put themselves in great peril and jeopardy of their lives for him. And so ended their days in joy and honour to the praise of Almighty G D D.

FINIS.

Reader, These Books (with many others) are to be sold by John Wright, at the Crown upon Ludgate-Hill.

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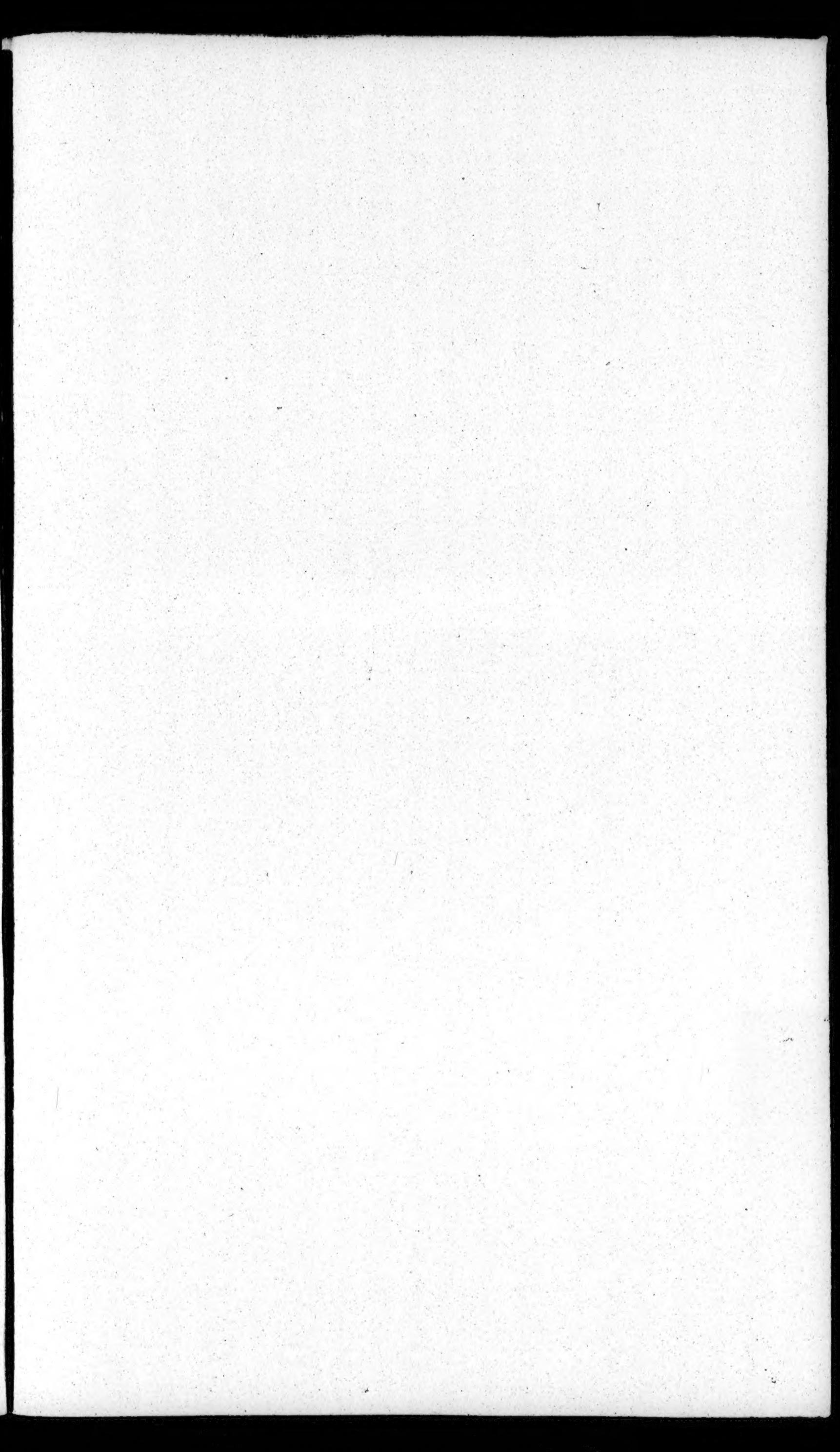
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O.J. Cov

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